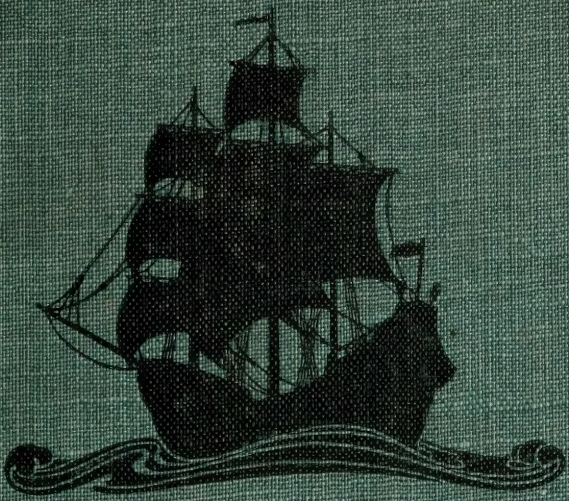

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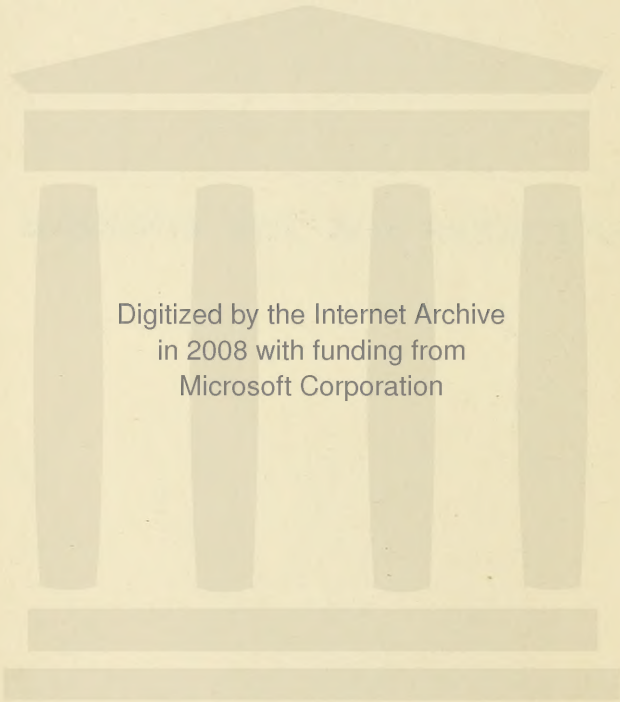

VENTURERS FOR THE KINGDOM

A STUDY IN THE HISTORY OF THE PILGRIM FATHERS

BY

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TO

J. RENDEL HARRIS

PREFACE

Those who wish to make the acquaintance of the Pilgrim Fathers do not lack guides. Some of the original authorities are fairly accessible. The most important of these is undoubtedly Governor Bradford's *History of Plymouth Plantation.* This work was first printed in 1856, edited with notes by Charles Deane. This edition has been used in this book. The Massachusetts Historical Society published a later and more elaborate edition in two volumes (1901). An edition in modern English, by Valerian Paget, was issued by Alston Rivers in 1909. The Everyman's Library (Dent & Co.) contains a valuable volume entitled *Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers,* with an introduction by John Masefield. The main contents are "New England's Memorial" and "Winslow's Relation." The first is a chronicle in the form of annals, composed by Secretary Morton, who drew largely on Bradford's material. He records events under each year up to 1669. A feature of this chronicle is the poetry in praise of departed leaders in Church and in State. The Pilgrims seem to have reserved their poetic flights for memorial occasions. It cannot be said that their verse reaches a high level.

"Winslow's Relation" is particularly valuable for the light it throws on the dealings of the Pilgrim Fathers with the Indians.

Professor E. Arber's book, *The Story of the Pilgrim Fathers*, 1606–1623 (Ward & Downey, Ltd., 1897), consists largely of well-selected extracts from original sources. It is, in fact, a source-book. Arber relied mainly on Bradford and Winslow, and he printed in full the very vivid diary of the first year's adventures and explorations, which is known as "Mourt's Journal or Relation." This was first published in 1622.

Of other original authorities, the writings of John Robinson are most important, at least for the beginnings of the whole movement. An edition of *The Works of John Robinson, the Pilgrim Father*, by Robert Ashton, appeared in three volumes in 1851. It can only be obtained second-hand. This edition has been used in this book, and will be cited as Robinson i, ii, or iii. The works of John Smyth have now been collected in an admirable edition by Dr. W. T. Whitley (Camb. Univ. Press, 1915). There is also some original material, bearing on the early history of the Pilgrim Church in Dr. Burrage's two volumes on *The Early English Dissenters* (Camb. Univ. Press, 1912). Along with these should be mentioned the book on John Smyth, entitled *Smith, the Se-Baptist and the Pilgrim Fathers, Helwys and Baptist Origins*, by Walter H. Burgess (James Clarke & Co., 1911). Mr. Burgess had the good fortune to discover John Robinson's birthplace.

An invaluable and indispensable volume is *The*

England and Holland of the Pilgrims, by Dr. H. M. Dexter (Constable & Co., 1906). This is a monument of devoted and careful research. It will be supplemented and corrected in some few particulars. Dr. Plooij and Dr. Rendel Harris have found one or two things in Dutch records which Dr. Dexter missed. But Dr. Dexter left little for others to glean in his particular field, and all subsequent students are his debtors.

The Pilgrim Fathers naturally figure in general histories, English and American. It will suffice to mention the excellent chapters devoted to the subject in S. R. Gardiner's *History of England*, 1603–1642 (vol. iv. ch. xxxvi.), John Fiske's *Beginnings of New England*, and J. A. Doyle's *The English in America, The Puritan Colonies*, vol. i. esp. ch. i. There is also a suggestive chapter in Dr. Byington's book, *The Puritan in England and New England*. Dr. Byington brings out well the difference between Plymouth and Boston in social outlook.

Of the books devoted especially to the history of the Pilgrim Fathers, the best, to my mind, are *The Pilgrim Fathers*, by Winnifred Cockshott (Methuen, 1909), *The Pilgrim Fathers of New England and their Puritan Successors*, by Dr. John Brown (R.T.S., 1897), and *The Pilgrim Republic*, by J. A. Goodwin (Houghton, Mifflin, 1899). The latest addition to the literature of the subject is Dr. Roland G. Usher's book, *The Pilgrims and their Story* (Macmillan, 1918). There are few points which Dr. Usher misses, but also few which he does not, in my judgment, misconceive. His interpre-

tations often seem to me perverse, and it has become part of the purpose of the present study to correct mistaken impressions for which Dr. Usher's book is responsible.

I have tried in these pages to give something of the flavour of the original sources, hoping that in this way John Robinson, William Bradford, and others may become real personalities to the reader. I have stressed the element of venture, because these men were consciously striking out on a new path. And they did this, not because they were naturally bold and venturesome, but because their timidity was overcome by their love of their own country, and still more by their love of that better country to whose service patriotism itself must be subordinate. Though this emphasis on the taking of risks for conscience' sake is necessary in strict justice to the Pilgrims themselves, it is also the aspect of their history which it may be most helpful to remember at the present time.

In closing this preface, I must add a few words of acknowledgment to some at least of those who have helped me in writing this book. In the first place, I wish to thank the Mayflower Tercentenary Celebration Committee for having invited and encouraged me to undertake this work at all. Then I am more indebted than I can say to Dr. J. Rendel Harris, who has watched over the book from start to finish, enriched it with many detailed suggestions, and permitted me to include in it a paper of his own, which appears as Appendix I. I am also much indebted to Dr. W. T. Whitley, who has placed much material at my disposal. I

should like to acknowledge the kindness of the librarian at the Bodleian Library in facilitating my reading in the summer. Lastly, I owe a great deal to the assistance of Miss F. W. Naish in preparing the manuscript for the press.

H. G. Wood.

Woodbrooke,
Christmas 1919.

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CHAPTER I

THE FIRST VENTURE AND THE MEN WHO MADE IT

In or about the year 1606 a number of people living in "sundry towns and villages, some of Nottinghamshire, some of Lincolnshire, and some of Yorkshire, where they border nearest together,"[1] took the decisive step of separating from the Church of England and of forming themselves into an independent Christian community. They had long been of the Puritan way of thinking. Through the labours of godly preachers, they had been "enlightened by the Word of God and had their ignorance and sins discovered unto them." They began "by His grace to reform their lives and make conscience of their ways," with the result that they had been "both scoffed and scorned by the profane multitude," and their ministers had been silenced and themselves persecuted for non-compliance with the terms of the Act of Uniformity. Presently they came to believe not only that certain rites and ceremonies retained in the Church of England were base and beggarly elements of popish superstition, not to be tolerated in the light of the Scriptures, but also that the authority of the

[1] Bradford, *History of Plymouth Plantation*, ed. 1856, p. 9.

bishops by which these ceremonies were imposed was an unchristian tyranny. "So many, therefore, of these professors as saw the evil of these things in these parts, and whose hearts the Lord had touched with heavenly zeal for His truth, they shook off this yoke of anti-christian bondage, and, as the Lord's free people, joined themselves in the fellowship of the Gospel, to walk in all His ways, made known, or to be made known unto them, according to their best endeavours, whatsoever it should cost them, the Lord assisting them."[1] Considerations of distance led them to meet as two distinct bodies or Churches. The one had its chief centre in Gainsborough, the second in the village of Scrooby, a posting-station where royal couriers changed horses on the great north road from London to Edinburgh. These two Churches, or two parts of one Church, kept in close touch with one another until the time of their removal to Holland. That removal itself was possibly a joint or common enterprise. But it was from Scrooby that the nucleus of the church of the Pilgrim Fathers was derived.

Before considering the circumstances under which, and the reasons for which they took this step, it will be well to become more closely acquainted with the people and their leaders. So far as the rank and file were concerned, they were humble folk enough. At Scrooby the Church consisted for the most part of small farmers and cottagers. "They were not acquainted with trade nor traffick," and "had only been used to a plain country life

[1] Bradford, p. 8.

and the innocent trade of husbandry." They conformed to the primitive Christian pattern in that not many rich, not many learned, not many noble, were called to join them. Yet among their leaders were men of university education and good social position—two at least being men of outstanding ability. They themselves would have disclaimed enrolment among the wise and prudent —a distinction they did not covet—but they could neither conceal nor deny their learning, and they placed all their wealth of intellect and knowledge unreservedly at the service of the community with which they identified themselves. Their intellectual power is not more conspicuous than their childlike humility and sterling worth.

The first of these leaders was John Smyth, who became the pastor of the Church at Gainsborough, and was indeed the central figure in the whole movement for a brief space at the outset. The date and place of his birth are unknown. He went up to Christ's College, Cambridge, in 1586. He was made a fellow of his college in 1594, and he continued in residence as a tutor for the next four years. Then he married—a step which ended his university career. For some time he lived an obscure and probably hard life, maintaining himself and his wife by practising as a physician. He was not a fully qualified practitioner, even as the requirements of his age went, but he had pursued some physical studies in the latter part of his university course, and his interest in medicine had continued ever since. In 1600 he was made Lecturer, or town-preacher in the city of Lincoln,

a position he held for two years and lost through changes in municipal politics. His appointment seems to have been a party appointment, and the section in the governing body which favoured Smyth unfortunately lost power through the doubtful tactics and dishonest conduct of its leader. Consequently, Smyth had to surrender his post through no fault of his own. It was a position of influence and material comfort, which in the normal course might have led to bigger things. The next stage in his career is not easy to trace. He may have been in a living, for he had not as yet any serious doubts about his ministerial orders, and his Puritanism had not led him to question his standing in the Church of England. But when James I defined his ecclesiastical policy in 1604 and came out definitely on the side of Bancroft and against the Puritans, Smyth passed through a prolonged crisis. For nine months he hesitated and canvassed the situation with other Puritan ministers. Then, in 1605, he determined to withdraw from the Established Church, and began to gather round him like-minded men and women.

It was characteristic of Smyth that, when once he had made his decision, he acted on it fearlessly and vigorously. He was resolved "to follow truth where'er it led," and in the eagerness of his pursuit he frequently outstripped his followers and companions. Indeed, he made more or less radical changes in belief and practice so often that his friends complained of "his instability and wantonness of wit." Yet his open-mindedness and willingness to learn were, and are, a great part of

his attractive power. In argument he was apt to be severely academic. His controversial writings are full of formal syllogisms, with the dry dust of the university schools thick upon them. But he was indefatigable in the search for truth. If he moved rapidly, his was not a zig-zag motion, and he never hesitated to embrace truth because it was clouded by prejudice and desperately unpopular. Thus he moved from Calvin's doctrine of predestination to the Arminian view of free-will, and he became the pioneer of the Baptists at a time when to proclaim one's self an Anabaptist was to expose one's self to the suspicion of complicity in moral enormities. In this some of his friends at Scrooby could not follow him, but, if they were more cautious than he, they did not lose the spirit of exploration in the things of God which he first infused into them. The distinguishing feature of the covenant described in Bradford's words " to walk in His ways made known, *or to be made known*," is the sense of a receding and widening spiritual horizon. These men were taking a first step which they knew committed them to other steps, not yet discerned. This readiness for adventure in the things of God came from Smyth. He emphasised this aspect of their covenant and rejoiced in it. In a letter prefixed to his account of the differences of the Churches of the separation, he says : " I will every day, as my errors shall be discovered, confess them and renounce them. For it is our covenant made with our God to forsake every evil way, whether in opinion or practice, that shall be manifested unto us at any time.

And, therefore, let no man plead now, as some have formerly done, 'these men are inconstant'; 'they would have they know not what'; 'they will never be satisfied'; and the like: *for we profess even so much as they object*; that we are inconstant in error, that we would have the truth, though in many particulars we are ignorant of it." [1] Smyth was true to this spirit to the last. In his final confession of faith and retractation of all his errors—a document worthy to rank with Richard Baxter's self-review among the classics of Christian literature, especially the literature of personal faith and experience—he says: "I profess I have changed, and shall be ready still to change, for the better; and if it be the glory [of others] to be peremptory and immutable in their articles of religion, they may enjoy that glory without my envy, though not without the grief of my heart for them." [2] The Pilgrim Fathers retained something of this temper, for it is embodied in the great saying, "The Lord hath yet more light and truth to break forth from His word." For this original impetus they owed a great debt to John Smyth.

If those who met in and around Gainsborough looked to John Smyth for guidance, the group at Scrooby found a leader in Richard Clyfton. He was an older man than Smyth. He had been incumbent at Babworth for many years, and, to him, the break with the old order must have been more costly than to Smyth. He was really too advanced in years for hardship and exile, but

[1] *The Works of John Smyth*, vol. i. p. 271.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 752.

fidelity to the Puritan ministry, as he had hitherto exercised it, seemed to him to require separation from the Church of England as reorganised by King James I and Archbishop Bancroft. His accession to the group must have been a source of strength to it. He was much respected, and he brought a sobriety of judgment which was perhaps a needed offset to the rather erratic brilliance of his younger colleague, John Smyth.

Possibly associated with R. Clyfton in the work of the ministry, and certainly a member of the Church at Scrooby, was John Robinson, who was destined to exert the most powerful individual influence on the Church of the Pilgrim Fathers. He was born in the year 1575, in the village of Sturton-le-Steeple, in Nottinghamshire. He went up to Cambridge in 1592. He belonged to Corpus Christi College, and became a fellow of his college in 1598. He was thus junior to Smyth, though he probably made his acquaintance while they were both resident at the University. He certainly came under the influence of the Rev. William Perkins, perhaps the most distinguished Puritan divine in Cambridge at the close of the sixteenth century, and, like John Robinson, a member of Corpus Christi College. Accepting a fellowship carried with it in those days the duty of taking orders. John Robinson was ordained, and in 1600 was appointed to the living of St. Andrew's in the city of Norwich, where he won a growing reputation as a Puritan preacher. From the first he was in difficulties about conforming to the conditions imposed upon the ministry in the

Church of England. He shared to the full the Puritan scruples about the wearing of surplices, about Romish and superstitious rites retained in the Prayer-book, and about the unscriptural character of the office and authority of the hierarchy. While in Norwich he read the writings of men like Robert Browne and Henry Barrow, who had separated from the Church ten or twenty years before. He was evidently drawn towards separation, but to take any such step seemed to involve an adverse verdict on the Puritan teachers whom he most respected and to whom he owed most. He therefore hesitated. Speaking of his attitude at this period, he said later: "I do indeed confess, to the glory of God and my own shame, that a long time before I entered this way [of separation] I took some taste of the truth in it by some treatises published in justification of it, which, the Lord knoweth, were sweet as honey to my mouth: and the very principal thing which for the time quenched all further appetite in me was the over-valuation which I made of the learning and holiness of these and the like persons [*i.e.* the Evangelical Puritans], blushing in myself to have a thought of pressing one hair-breadth before them in this thing, behind whom I knew myself to come so many miles in all other things." [1] This restraint was overcome when his bishop suspended him for non-compliance with the requirements of the Prayer-book. He lingered in Norwich, but, as those who continued to resort to him for spiritual counsel and prayer were excommunicated, and his presence became a

[1] *Works of Robinson, The Pilgrim Father*, vol. ii. p. 51.

source of trouble to his friends, he withdrew at the beginning of 1604.

Robinson appears to have retired to his home in Sturton-le-Steeple, but he paid a farewell visit to Cambridge, in order to resign his fellowship. His resolve to separate from the Church was confirmed by two sermons which he heard in Cambridge, one from Mr. Chaderton, the first Master of Emmanuel College (the college founded by Sir Walter Mildmay in 1584, to be a centre of Puritan influence), and the other from Mr. Baynes, successor to his old teacher, Mr. W. Perkins. Mr. Chaderton spoke "upon the relation which Mary made to the disciples of the resurrection of Christ," from which he argued that "the things which concerned the whole Church were to be declared publicly to the whole Church, and not to some part only." This doctrine seemed to Robinson to confirm the separatist view that discipline and excommunication should be the concern of the whole congregation, and not confined either to bishops or elders. Mr. Baynes, speaking from Eph. v. 7 or 11, showed "the unlawfulness of familiar conversation between the servants of God and the wicked." His main arguments were: "(1) That the former are light and the other darkness, between which God hath separated. (2) That the godly hereby are endangered to be leavened with the others' wickedness. (3) That the wicked are hereby hardened in receiving such approbation from the godly. (4) That others are thereby offended, and occasioned to think them all alike, and as birds of a feather which so flock

together." [1] Robinson judged that if the arguments for separation from the worldly in social life were so strong, the duty of separation in church-communion was even more imperative. He went home, therefore, a convinced Separatist. On February 15th, 1603, in Greasley, thirty-five miles south of Scrooby, he had married Bridget White, who came from the same town as himself, and whose family, like his own, belonged to the yeoman-class of small but well-to-do farmers. While at home he must have discussed with John Smyth of Gainsborough, Richard Bernard of Worksop, and other Puritan clergy, the whole situation as shaped by the decisions of James I. He did not go back on his determination to separate. He threw in his lot with the little group at Scrooby, and they never secured a more distinguished or more valuable recruit.

Two other names claim attention. The group to which R. Clyfton ministered met frequently, if not usually, at the Manor-house, Scrooby. Their host was William Brewster, who held the office of postmaster. Both his residence and his office marked him out as a man of some social distinction, and his position and his character alike fitted him for the leadership, which he naturally assumed. The manor belonged to the Archbishop of York. James I in vain tried to persuade his Grace to surrender the manor to him as a hunting-lodge, in exchange for some other equally valuable manor. The Archbishop was not inclined to surrender Scrooby, perhaps because of its convenience as a

[1] Dexter, *The England and Holland of the Pilgrims*, p. 399.

resting-place on the high-road to London. In any case, Brewster remained the Archbishop's tenant and representative. Brewster, like Smyth and Robinson, was a Cambridge man. He had been a student at Peterhouse, though he did not apparently graduate, and may not have spent more than one year at the University. He subsequently saw something of the diplomatic service, and for the kind of experience he had in this service we cannot do better than cite Bradford's brief account of his early life. The passage likewise makes clear the place Brewster took in the separatist movement.

Bradford, when recording Brewster's death in his *History of Plymouth Plantation*, writes thus of his early days. "I should say something of his life, if to say a little were not worse than to be silent. But I cannot wholly forbear, though happily more may be done hereafter. After he had attained some learning,—viz. the knowledge of the Latin tongue and some insight into Greek, and had spent some little time at Cambridge—then being first seasoned with the seeds of grace and virtue—he went to court, and served that religious and godly gentleman, Mr. Davison, for several years, when he was Secretary of State. His master found him so discreet and faithful that he trusted him more than all the others who were round him, and employed him in all matters of greatest trust and secrecy. He esteemed him rather as a son than a servant; and, knowing his wisdom and godliness, he would converse with him in private more as a friend and

familiar than as a master. He accompanied him when he was sent as ambassador by the Queen into the Low Countries, in the Earl of Leicester's time, besides other important affairs of state, to receive possession of the cautionary towns, in token of which the keys of Flushing were delivered to him in her Majesty's name. Mr. Davison held them some time, handing them over to Mr. Brewster, who kept them under his pillow the first night. On his departure, the Netherlands honoured Mr. Davison with a gold chain; he gave it into the keeping of Mr. Brewster, and when they arrived in England commanded him to wear it as they rode through the country, until they arrived at court. He remained with him through his troubles, when, later, he was dismissed in connection with the death of the Queen of Scots, and for some good time after, doing him much faithful service.

"Afterwards Mr. Brewster went and lived in the country, much respected by his friends and the gentlemen of the neighbourhood, especially the godly and religious. He did much good there, in promoting and furthering religion, not only by his practice and example and the encouragement of others, but by procuring good preachers for the places thereabouts, and persuading others to help and assist in such work, generally taking most of the expense on himself—sometimes beyond his means. Thus he continued for many years, doing the best he could, and walking according to the light he saw, till the Lord revealed Himself further to him. In the end, the tyranny of the bishops against godly preachers and people, in silencing

the former and persecuting the latter, caused him and many more to look further into things, and to realise the unlawfulness of their episcopal callings, and to feel the burden of their many anti-christian corruptions, which both he and they endeavoured to throw off.

" After they had joined themselves together in communion, as was mentioned earlier, he was a special help and support to them. On the Lord's day they generally met at his house, which was a manor of the bishop's, and he entertained them with great kindness when they came, providing for them at heavy expense to himself. . . ." [1]

The foregoing passage is a wonderful tribute to Brewster's quiet devotion to the separatist Church whose cause he espoused. He devoted his property to its service, and the position he held was a lucrative one. He later surrendered his office and his prospects for the sake of the Church. In their second venture, when the little community moved to Holland, his previous acquaintance with the Low Countries must have stood them in good stead. As ruling and teaching Elder he was destined to serve the Pilgrim Church faithfully till his death in 1643. But the initial debt of the movement to this sagacious and influential layman was clearly considerable. The attitude of Brewster probably led to the formation of the Scrooby group.

The other outstanding name among the men who covenanted together in 1606 is that of William Bradford. He was not, indeed, a conspicuous

[1] Bradford, pp. 409–12.

member at the outset, since he was then quite a young man, but he requires a special introduction, because Plymouth Plantation owed so much to the practical wisdom of his leadership throughout the early critical years of its existence. Moreover, all who are interested in the Pilgrim Fathers recognise the worth of his simple but delightful history of the whole enterprise—a history which is deservedly described as the epic of the movement. A paragraph in Cotton Mather's *Magnalia* acquaints us with the way in which William Bradford was led to join the Church at Scrooby.

"Among those devout people was our William Bradford, who was born anno 1588, in an obscure village called Austerfield, where the people were as unacquainted with the Bible as the Jews do seem to have been with part of it in the days of Josiah; a most ignorant and licentious people, and like unto their priest. Here, and in some other places, he had a comfortable inheritance left him of his honest parents, who died while he was yet a child, and cast him on the education, first of his grandparents, and then of his uncles, who devoted him, like his ancestors, unto the affairs of husbandry. Soon and long sickness kept him, as he would afterwards thankfully say, from the vanities of youth, and made him the fitter for what he was afterwards to undergo. When he was about a dozen years old the reading of the Scriptures began to cause great impressions upon him; and those impressions were most assisted and improved when he came to enjoy Mr. Richard Clyfton's illuminating ministry, not far from his abode; he was then also further

befriended by being brought into the company and fellowship of such as were then called professors, though the young man that brought him into it did after become a profane and wicked apostate. Nor could the wrath of his uncles, nor the scoff of his neighbours, now turned upon him, as one of the Puritans, divert him from his pious inclinations." [1]

We shall see later that only a very small proportion of those who sailed in the *Mayflower* in 1620 can be traced as original members of the group which met in the Manor-house at Scrooby, but the part played by John Robinson, William Brewster, and William Bradford in shaping and guiding the whole movement was such that we are still justified in regarding Scrooby as the birthplace of the Pilgrim Church.

The step which these men took involved them in the odium and risks of separation. For they were not the first to break away from the Church of England. As early as 1567 a congregation with Mr. Richard Fitz as pastor had been suppressed. Puritans who denounced separatism affected to regard John Bolton, an elder in this Church, as the founder of it and the first separatist. They fastened attention on Bolton because he publicly recanted, and, later on, hanged himself. Whereupon they would propound the following query to those who separated: "Whether their rent, schism, and separation from the Church and congregation of England can (in any probability) be pleasing unto God, seeing it hath such unhappy

[1] Bradford, Introd., pp. xvi., xvii.

beginnings, the first founder of it (Master Bolton) coming to Judas his shameful and fearful end, hanging himself?" The Puritans likewise drew comfort from the history of Robert Browne, the next pioneer in the way of separation. It was in 1582 that Browne published a book which included, as its first part, his treatise on "Reform without tarrying for any." In this he urged voluntary groups to take the initiative in further reform. But he subsequently recanted, or at least conformed, and took a country living where his eccentricities gave rise to many scandals, which were used to discredit the movement he was supposed to have fathered. The term Brownist became a term of reproach. It carried with it the idea of crack-brained perversity, and the title was of course at once applied to Smyth, Robinson, and their followers. Later on, the congregational idea of the Church had been accepted and advocated by Henry Barrow, and John Greenwood, who, after years in prison, witnessed to their faith by martyrdom along with John Penry in 1593. At that time a law was passed condemning Brownists and Separatists to exile. The members of the Church that had gathered round Barrow went into exile, and settled at Amsterdam under the leadership of Francis Johnson and Henry Ainsworth.

In 1593 it was thought that separation had been satisfactorily extinguished. Lord Bacon could say: "As for those which we call Brownists, being when they were at the most a very small number of very silly and base people, they are now, thanks to God, by the good remedies that have been used,

suppressed and worn out, so as there is scarce any news of them." The last ten years of Elizabeth's reign had been comparatively quiet and free from ecclesiastical controversy. Bishops and statesmen congratulated themselves on the apparently growing calm. Brownism, a fanatical vagary condemned by all sober opinion in Church and State, was a danger that had passed. The law against Separatists remained on the Statute-book, and when, with the accession of James I the hopes and conflicts of contending parties revived, the Separatists also showed their heads again and were dealt with according to law. In 1604, four Separatists in London were forced to abjure the realm, *i.e.* were banished, under the Statute of 1593. When, therefore, John Smyth and his followers took their covenant they were taking a step that was not merely unpopular, but generally condemned by the great weight of respectable opinion. They were also running the risk of banishment. What, then, were their reasons for making a venture which left them so isolated, and was likely to result in such painful consequences ?

CHAPTER II

THE REASONS WHICH LED TO SEPARATION

The literature of the triangular controversy, in which the Separatists had soon to defend their position against Anglicans and Puritans, principally against the latter, is so voluminous and so thorough that it is not always easy to keep hold of the main issues. The fundamental question concerned the nature and constitution of Christ's Church. The Separatists held positively that the Church of Christ could include only those who sincerely and voluntarily professed their faith in Him, and negatively that the Church of England was not a true Church of Christ, since it included many persons who made no profession of Christianity, and since it had been constituted by an act of civil authority. In one aspect of it, Separation was an emphatic protest against the Act of Uniformity which formed the basis of the Elizabethan settlement in religion. That Act might be described as a kind of compulsory spiritual service Act, by which all Elizabeth's subjects were deemed to be members of the Church. The Act provided no exemption-clause for conscientious objectors, and no examination as to the moral fitness of the bulk

of the recruits for the service in which they were to be enlisted. It proposed to create an A1 Christian Church out of a morally C3 population. The Separatists declared that you could not form a Christian Church by compelling all and sundry to join it.

When the exiled followers of Henry Barrow drew up their first apology in 1596 they set down first, among the heads of misliking the Church of England, their objection to the planting and constituting of the Church. "Here are none exempted or excluded be they never so profane or wretched, no atheist, adulterer, thief, or murderer, no liar, perjurer, witch or conjurer, and all are one fellowship, one body, one Church." Similarly, Ainsworth, in his book *Counterpoyson* (1608), argues that the Church of England lacks the marks of a true Church, because in the first place "they are not a separated people called out from the world, which is one principal mark urged often in the Scriptures." Ainsworth also expresses forcibly the Separatist's objection to the use of the power of the State to form a Church. "Your Church [*i.e.* the Church of England] can show no covenant that was made between Christ and her at any time; the gathering and planting of your Church hath been by the magistrate's authority, not by the word of Christ, winning men's souls unto His faith, separating them from unbelievers, and taking them to communion with Himself.

"If this [gathering churches by magistrates' power] be a lawful and orderly course, it is strange that Christ sent forth poor fishermen to convert

souls by preaching and sent not princes . . . to make disciples by compulsion and penalty."

In 1610 John Robinson, in his lengthy *Justification of Separation*, thrashed the whole matter out in controversy with Mr. Richard Bernard of Worksop, a Puritan minister who at first inclined towards Separatism and then withdrew, becoming somewhat bitter against Smyth and Robinson because he had gone some way towards joining them. They also handle him severely because they judge him fallen from grace. John Robinson comes back repeatedly to this question of church-membership. He is convinced that true Churches can be formed only of those who respond to the preaching of the Word, and that the Church of England has not been so formed. "The true apostolic churches, having a true constitution, were gathered and constituted of such men and women as by the preaching of the gospel were made disciples, had faith and repentance wrought in them to the obtaining of the forgiveness of sins and promise of life eternal, and to sanctification and obedience. But the Church of England was not so gathered after popery, but on the contrary, without preaching of the gospel, and of men and women for the most part ignorant, faithless, impenitent, disobedient, to whom no promise of the forgiveness of sins and life eternal appertains: whereupon, the conclusion necessarily followeth that the constitution of the Church of England is not true or apostolic, but false, counterfeit, and apostatical." [1] The forcible inclusion of openly immoral persons particularly offended the

[1] Robinson, vol. ii. p. 96.

Separatists. "Your national Church was constituted and gathered, for the greatest part, of fornicators, drunkards, blasphemers, and the like; with such wild branches was your vineyard planted!" [1]

The Separatists felt they could not continue in communion with the Church of England because, as Robinson said, "we cannot acknowledge some of you brethren unless we acknowledge all amongst you for such. . . . Now by the Scriptures we have not learnt to enter any such fraternity where we must acknowledge brother-priest, brother half-priest, brother dumb-priest, brother atheist, brother epicure, brother drunkard, brother blasphemer, brother wizard, brother conjurer, and, lastly, brother recusant Papist, if not living yet dead, for so you must bury him as your dear brother, committing his soul to God and his body to the earth." [2] William Bradford makes a neat and even humorous reference to this toleration of immoral persons in the Church of England, in replying to Puritan criticism of Henry Barrow. Barrow had been a fast, loose-living man, until his conversion, and the Puritans argued that God would not use as a reformer a man who had been so vile in his youth. Bradford comments: "That he was tainted with vices at the court before his conversion and calling, it is not very strange: and if he had lived and died in that condition, it is like he might have gone out of the world without any public brand on his name, and have passed for a tolerable Christian and member of the Church."

[1] Robinson, vol. ii. p. 355. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 109.

The Church of England, then, included men who made no pretence of Christianity either in thought or in action. And such men had no choice. "Be he of the King's natural subjects he shall, by order of law, be made true matter of the Church, whether he will or no." [1] The result is far from edifying. Take Mr. Bernard's own parish of Worksop, for example. "There were in it," says Robinson, "to mine own knowledge when you wrote this book [some] that held most blasphemous errors touching the very Trinity: and there are at this day, as I am certainly informed, [those] who are so moved to receive the Word as that your churchwardens are driven to spend a great part of the Lord's day in hunting them from the ale-house to the temple. And if this be your case, what is the condition of most congregations in the land, to which the Word of God hath not so much as been offered in any indifferent measure, for the moving of their hearts to receive it? The truth is, the people are drawn, in the most congregations most of them, and many in all, by compulsive laws, to keep their parish church, to hear Divine Service, to communicate at Easter, and to receive the sacraments and other rites: as is commanded in the Communion book; but how far the most are from having their hearts thus moved, as is pretended of all, to receive the Word of God, appeareth too evidently in that great contempt and hatred wherein they have such amongst themselves as do in any sincerity either preach or profess the same." [2]

John Robinson was prepared to concede great

[1] Robinson, vol. ii. p. 288. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 338.

powers to the civil authority in enforcing religious observance,—concessions which were destined to bear evil fruit in the later years of the colony under Bradford's governorship. Robinson would allow the State to repress open idolatry. He would admit that the magistrates might compel men to attend public worship and listen to the preaching of the Word. He even goes so far as to permit the State to inflict some punishment less than death on those who, after hearing the Word, decline to join the Church. But one thing no King can do. He cannot by mere proclamation or enactment declare and make men members of the Church of Christ. "Neither Hezekiah nor Josiah nor any other King, either of Judah or England, had or hath power from God, to compel an apparent profane person, so remaining, either to join unto or continue in the Church, and the Church so to receive and continue him." [1]

The only means of making men Christians is the preaching of the Word. "When the Lord Jesus purposed to advance the sceptre of His kingdom, He sent out His disciples, not furnished with sword and spear, nor yet backed with human laws or authority, but with charge and commission to publish and declare His holy commandments and the things which He had taught them, and thereby to make disciples or gain subjects unto His kingdom, which they also practised: admitting and initiating men into the Church upon their voluntary submission unto and profession of the faith of Christ." [2]

[1] Robinson, vol. ii. p. 315. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 307.

In another passage Robinson adds: "The gospel is a supernatural thing, and cannot possibly be yielded unto voluntarily by a natural man or persuaded, but by a supernatural motive which is only itself: and that by the operation of the Spirit also in some measure: it cannot be understood and believed, but by itself published and proclaimed as the sun is seen by its own light: much less can it be willed and willingly yielded unto: for the will must follow the understanding: neither can any man will that he knows not." [1] This last argument is directed against Bernard's contention that Queen Elizabeth's proclamation was a kind of teaching, and the people's obedience to it a voluntary acceptance of the gospel. Robinson says such a voluntary and unintelligent acceptance is worthless. "The question is of such a teaching as was effectually to make a whole nation of Antichristians the week before, true Christians and a true church. It was, indeed, the only effectual means the people had generally; and if the queen had proclaimed the contrary the next week, it would have been as effectual to have turned them to their former vomit again." [2]

Robinson's view of the superficial, and non-religious character of the change in the people's religion effected by Elizabeth's laws was not seriously questioned in his own day. Whitgift, in a memorable paragraph in his answer to the first Puritan admonition to Parliament in 1572, had appealed to the same facts to show the futility of the Puritan demand for the people to choose their

[1] Robinson, vol. ii. p. 319. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 319.

own ministers. The character of parishioners, Whitgift argued, made popular election impossible, and the precedent of the apostolic age inapplicable. "In the Apostles' time all, or the most that were Christians, were virtuous and godly, and such as did sincerely profess the Word, and therefore the election of their pastor might safely be committed to them: now the Church is full of hypocrites, dissemblers, drunkards, whoremongers, etc., so that if any election were committed to them, they would be sure to take one like themselves. In the Apostles' time, all that professed Christ had knowledge, and were able to judge who were meet to be their pastor. Now the most be ignorant and without judgment in such matters. In the Apostles' time there was in the church no Idolaters, no superstitious persons, no Papists; now the Church is full of Papists, Atheists, and such like. Who seeth not therefore what strange ministers we should have, if the election of them were committed to their several parishes?" [1]

Whitgift drew the conclusion that the appointment and control of the ministry and the Church by the hierarchy and the civil authority was right and necessary under the circumstances. Robinson recognised that there was a certain force in this argument. Commenting on the parable of the Tares, to which men constantly appealed to justify the inclusion of the immoral, the ignorant, and the superstitious within the Church, he says: "Our Saviour Christ doth plainly teach that this field was sown with good seed alone: and that

[1] John Whitgift, *An Answer to a Certain Libel*, pp. 44, 45.

after 'whilst men slept, the enemy, the devil, came and sowed tares amongst the wheat.' But, on the contrary, in the sowing the English field, whether we respect the national or parochial Churches, together with the wheat, the tares, and that exceeding the other infinitely, were at first and yet are sown, and that of purpose and under most severe penalties. And hence is the first and principal prejudice to our English harvest and from which I conceive all the rest to come. For unto this Church, thus clapped and clouted together of all persons, of all sorts and spirits without difference, no man equally and prudently weighing things can deny but that the pompous and imperious hierarchical government together with all its accessories doth right well accord." [1]

This is really an acknowledgment of the strength of Whitgift's position, which the Separatist undermines by declaring that the forcible inclusion of all and sundry in the Church is an unchristian and immoral course.

It is still generally supposed that in taking this position the Separatists showed a narrowly exclusive spirit, while the Church of England and Queen Elizabeth acted in a more catholic temper of Christian charity. "Nothing could be more noble, more divine, than the conception of a Church which had room even for the weakest and most frail, which would hold out a hand to any who turned to her for help, though they should fall again and again. And this was the principle of

[1] Robinson, vol. iii. p. 76.

the National Church." [1] It may be doubted whether the Elizabethan settlement was consciously inspired and directed by any such principle; but, whether of set purpose or not, it did achieve some of the results of such a principle, and won the gratitude and affection of men like Hooker, who perceived the dangers of Puritan and Separatist rigidity. The point may be illustrated by a Puritan minister's description of his parish—a description to which both Ainsworth and Robinson appeal to justify Separation. A Mr. Nichols gave this account of his parish: "I have been in a parish of 400 communicants, and, marvelling that my preaching was so little regarded, I took upon me to confer with every man and woman before they received the communion. And I asked them of Christ, what He was in His Person: what His office: how sin came into the world: what punishment for sin: what becomes of our bodies being rotten in the grave: and lastly whether it were possible for a man to live so uprightly that by well-doing he might win heaven. In all the former questions, I scarce found ten in the hundred to have any knowledge, but in the last question scarce one but did affirm that a man might be saved by his own well-doing, and that he trusted he did so live

[1] Cockshott, *The Pilgrim Fathers*, p. 23. Cf. S. R. Gardiner, *History of England*, vol. iv. p. 143, who speaks of "the large-heartedness of a Church which refused to content herself with claiming as her children the pious and the devoted, but which announced, in the only way in which it was at that time possible to announce it, that the ignorant and the vicious, the publican and the harlot, were equally the object of her care with the wisest and best of her sons."

that by God's grace he should obtain everlasting life by serving of God and good prayers, etc." [1] The Puritan and the Separatist regarded these communicants as practical Atheists. Mediæval Christianity, inculcating faith in the Sacraments, the use of good prayers, and obedience to the Ten Commandments, seemed to men like Ainsworth and Robinson not an imperfect and immature form of Christianity, but a dangerous and blasphemous error. It must be admitted that large numbers of simple people were bewildered by the Reformation and bored by Puritan preaching. They did not understand the points of doctrine to which the Reformers attached so much importance. Yet their faith was not an entirely empty profession, and their morality was not undermined. Moreover, there was a tendency to harsh and narrow judgments in Separatist Churches. This tendency was not uniform, and we shall enquire later into the catholicity or exclusiveness of John Robinson's Church. The Pilgrim Fathers will not be found among the supporters of a harsh and extreme rigidity. But Separatists show in their history in Holland that they were apt to make each new

[1] Ainsworth, *Counterpoyson*, p. 183. Cf. Robinson, vol. ii. p. 88. This is still the Englishman's religion. In *The Army and Religion*, p. 117, there is a passage from a joint report from a base in France. "It may safely be said that while, in general, the conception of God is taken from Christ, there is very widespread failure to understand or appreciate essential Christian doctrines. One is met everywhere with the question (put in such a way as to imply an assertion) whether a decent, respectable life is not enough to recommend one to God, and to ensure that it will be all right with one in the Hereafter."

discovery of truth, whether in Church-order or in morals, the basis of a further division.

It might be argued, from all this, that Elizabeth's ecclesiastical policy was charitably designed to shield old-fashioned folk from Puritan zeal and Separatist fanaticism. But there is another side to the matter. The Puritans and their allies cared for the people more profoundly than the Queen cared. She wanted the common people not to trouble their heads about religion, but to go on in an easy, superficial traditionalism. Puritan and Separatist desired the people to have an intelligent faith of their own. Nor was the controversy about faith and works an abstruse scholastic matter, though Protestantism was fast developing a scholastic phase. If it be true that "merit lives from man to man, and not, O Lord, from man to Thee," then at best the popular trust in good works is but to linger in the forecourts of religion and to shrink from pressing on to the great reality. The Separatists had a great longing that men should get to the heart of true religion, and not be content with a creed received on authority and without understanding.

Furthermore, it is clear that the Reformation settlement in England was determined less by Christian charity than by political expediency, less by a noble divine ideal than by considerations of policy. It was based on the assumption that national unity was all-important and could only be secured by the maintenance of a National Church. The first part of this assumption need not be questioned. If England was to remain in-

dependent, and to exert an appreciable influence in Europe in the sixteenth century, it was necessary for the people to be united in support of the monarchy. And the chief source of division was religion, as was only too clearly evidenced in the unhappy state of France. Elizabeth dreaded the political consequences of religious discussion and ecclesiastical change. It was Elizabeth who forced her first two Primates to carry through a policy of strict Uniformity against their own better judgments. She did so because she thought this was the way to maintain "Christian charity, unity and concord, the very basis of our religion," and to avoid "great annoyance, trouble, and deformity to the rest of the whole body of the realm." Sir Walter Raleigh, in his *History of the World*, expressed the statesman's fear of the effects of separatism, though in this, as in his estimate of the numbers of Brownists in 1593 as 20,000, he clearly exaggerated. "Time will bring it to pass that if this spirit be not resisted (*i.e.* the multiplication of private opinions and sects) God will be turned out of the churches, into barns, fields, mountains, and hedges; and the officers of the ministry, robbed of all dignity and respect, will be as contemptible as such places: all order, discipline, and Church government left to newness of opinions and men's several fancies. Yea, and soon after, as many kinds of religion spring up as there are parish churches: every contentious and ignorant person clothing his fancy with the gift of revelation; insomuch that, when the truth, which is but one, and shall appear to the simple multitude no less

variable than contrary to itself, the faith of men will soon die away by degrees and all religion held in scorn and contempt." [1] This nightmare vision of religion reduced to naught, and a realm dissolved into individual fragments, led men to strive long for an all-inclusive National Church.

The age of Elizabeth was also the age of faith in monarchy. It is not out of respect to mere tradition that the author of *The Mirror of Policy* adopts Aristotle's classification of constitutions, putting monarchy as best of those that are good, and democracy as least evil of those that are bad. This valuation of monarchy fitted in with the experience of his time. It seems strange now that men should ever have supported the principle "Cuius regio, eius religio," *i.e.* the religion of a country shall be determined by its prince; but the institution of monarchy and the unity of the State were thought to be worth that price. The Elizabethan Settlement was effected at a time when men were prepared to concede almost absolute powers to the Crown, and Elizabeth had her way. The best of her Bishops and statesmen, while accepting her policy, criticised and deplored it. They knew that the limits of variation imposed on the ministry need not have been so narrow, and that more liberty and less uniformity would have made the Church more truly national and more truly one. But it was left to the Separatists to question the very idea of a National Church, to point out that it was already

[1] Quoted in Waddington's *History of Congregationalism*, 1567–1700, pp. 74, 75.

an anachronism, a contradiction in terms. For it is apparent, from the passages already cited, that they were not insisting on absurdly high standards of Church-membership. They were insisting that the King's natural subjects could not properly be regarded as members of the Church without further test or qualification. The period of the Renaissance and Reformation was marked by a good deal of moral chaos. Men now openly accepted in life and thought non-Christian and even anti-Christian standards. There were the beginnings of a cleft between Christian faith and a revived Pagan culture. There were many avowed Atheists and unabashed Epicureans in Elizabethan England. The proposal to include them all in one National Church was an absurdity. The Separatists had the courage to say so, and to attempt to build up the Church on a fresh basis of membership. Their protest was just and necessary.

In their further objections to the government, ministry, and worship of the Church of England, the Separatists did not differ so much from the Puritans. Both felt an intense horror of Rome, and the rule of monarchical Bishops, the ecclesiastical courts and canons, the liturgy based on the Mass-book (" some few gross things left out "), all seemed survivals from an anti-Christian Romish order. It is easy to see now, as Hooker and others saw then, that there was something of prejudice in this resolve to get rid of everything belonging to the old unreformed Catholic Church. The Puritans and the Separatists had little idea of the services rendered to mankind by the Mediæval

Church. They judged Rome without much historical perspective. On the other hand, they had a deep and direct appreciation of the anti-Christian tyranny which Rome had become, and they lived at a time when Protestantism had still to struggle for its life. But criticisms of detail suggested by fear of Rome were also reinforced, in the case of Separatists, by their idea of the rights and duties of members of the Church of Christ. They objected to prelacy, because they thought the ministry ought not to be independent of the laity. They objected to the discipline administered through episcopal courts, because they held that the Christian community should be responsible for discipline—a responsibility which the humblest bona-fide member ought to share. They objected to a prescribed liturgy, not only because it fettered the pastor in prayer, but also because it excluded lay preaching. The Separatists stood for this element of "popularity," as it was called, a word which was a source of terror to those in authority. The Separatists were ridiculed for their faith in the rank and file of the Christian Church. How unfit the people are to elect ministers! How ridiculous for cobblers and tapsters and tailors to exhort and expound! How confusing and inconvenient to settle Church affairs and matters of discipline in an assembly wherein all have equal power and voice in the determining of things! For all such critics, Robinson had this answer: "What though this inconveniency do arise sometimes through man's corruption, it should be otherwise: and we must ever consider of the nature of God's ordinances in

their right use, and when men are exercised in them as they should be, and not according to frail man's aberration and abuse in and of the same: and if men be sometimes careless of their duties, we must not therefore deprive them of their rights." [1] It should be noted that Whitgift admitted that in the Apostolic Church all the members shared in the responsibility for discipline, took part in the election of pastors, and even in the public worship and ministry. But none of these features of Apostolic Christianity could be reproduced in a Church which included all the King's subjects. The Separatists' reply was, confine membership in the Church to those for whom it was originally intended, and you can then set up and enjoy the true apostolic ministry and worship. They separated in order to secure these things, which admittedly they could not find in the Church of England.

Why did the Separatists feel obliged to take a bolder and more decisive stand than the Puritans with whom they had so much in common? There were real and significant differences in emphasis and tendency between those who stayed in the Church of England and those who came out. In the first place, the Puritans still believed in the idea of a National Church and in the use of the coercive power of the State to maintain such a Church. The Puritans might deprecate the accusation that they favoured violence in religion, as when John Geree writes: "This forcing is not properly force neither, for the will cannot be forced:

[1] Robinson, vol. ii. p. 212.

but it is only an inducing to the right with penalties." It may fairly be claimed that the Puritans were as ready to use coercion as Elizabeth herself, and only complained that it was used on the wrong people. But it is hardly just to couple most of the Separatists with the Puritans on this issue.[1] It is true that the Pilgrim Fathers did not grasp the full principle of toleration, but it was clearly involved in their position, and it is not an accident that the first English tracts in favour of freedom of concience were written by members of Separatist Churches in Holland. The Separatist had recognised limits to the power of the State in religion, even if he failed to keep to them when he started State-building himself. In the second place, the Puritan was more concerned about the ministry, and the Separatist more concerned about the rights of the ordinary Church member. The Puritan tended to conceive of the ministry or eldership as an independent, self-governing body, requiring indeed approval and appointment by the faithful, but thereafter guiding and governing the Church. To the Separatist the ministry was dependent on the Church, subject to its censure, by no means entitled to monopolise the work of prophecy and teaching. John Robinson perceived, with Milton, that new presbyter might be but old priest writ large. When Bernard protests that it is against the dignity and office of the ministers to be subject to the censures of the Church, Robinson remarks: "This indeed is the thing: the dignity of the priesthood is it which goes nearest

[1] Cf. Cockshott, p. 23.

you." [1] In his "people's plea for the exercise of prophecy," a defence of lay-preaching, Robinson has to meet the view that it is a disgrace to the minister if laymen add to his discourse. His comment shows how he felt the Puritan jealousy for the dignity of the ministry to be dangerous and mistaken. "Now the exception of disgrace to the former [the first speaker, the minister] by the latter's speaking [the lay-preacher's addition] is well to be minded that it may appear how evil customs do infect the minds of godly men, so as they think it a disgrace that one should give place to another, to speak after him, further or otherwise than he hath done. But it was not so from the beginning: but since they who under Christ should be servants of the Church, have been masters and have exercised this magisterial teaching now in use, where ordinarily one alone in a church . . . must be heard all his life long, thinking it a disgrace to have another speak anything further than he hath done." [2] Later he adds: "It is the disease of the exalted clergy to scorn to learn anything of others than themselves, and almost one of another." [3] This may suffice to illustrate the difference in emphasis. The Puritans were willing to go on so long as in some form or other they could exercise their ministry. The Separatists desired, above all, to see the true Church in being, however small in numbers and however poorly equipped.

The Separatist also differed from the Puritan as to the nature of the crisis precipitated by the

[1] Robinson, vol. ii. p. 233. [2] *Ibid.*, vol. iii. p. 307.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 325.

announcement of the ecclesiastical policy of the new King. During the last ten years of Elizabeth's reign the inclination to separate died down. Men fixed their hopes on the new reign. The Puritans anticipated concessions from James I. There followed the Hampton Court Conference, and the refusal of nearly all the Puritans' demands. New canons were issued, many of them aimed at Puritan positions. In particular, the Puritan practice of gathering inner circles of instructed believers within the parochial system was definitely condemned. In 1605 Uniformity was enforced. About 300 Puritan ministers were suspended, and of these 60 were finally deprived. All efforts on behalf of deprived ministers were severely repressed. Apparently the bulk of Puritan ministers thought they might go on as before. To the Separatist this no longer seemed honest. They felt that a crisis had come. "They [the reforming preachers] can no longer halt as hitherto they have: but either they must reconcile them to their Fathers [the Bishops] or quite forsake them." [1] In face of these new canons it was no longer possible to keep in existence the fellowships of believers which constituted a Church within a Church. But true Christians could not forsake the assembling of themselves together. They must therefore separate. It was thus that in 1605 or 1606 men and women in and around Gainsboro' and Scrooby, who had constantly held meetings together in previous years, now definitely entered into covenant with one another, and formed an independent Church.

[1] Ainsworth, *Counterpoyson*, p. 168.

While the negative element of revolt or reaction from the Church by law established must be fully recognised, it should not overshadow the positive urge behind the movement. John Robinson never stressed the negative aspect of Separatism. John Cotton records of him that, " when some Englishmen that offered themselves to become members of his Church would sometimes in their confessions profess their separation from the Church of England, Mr. Robinson would bear witness against such profession : avouching they required no such profession of separation from this or that or any Church, but only from the world." [1] In his *Just and Necessary Apology* (1619), John Robinson himself declared : " Our faith is not negative, as Papists used to object to the evangelical churches : nor which consists in the condemning of others and wiping their names out of the bead-roll of churches, but in the edifying of ourselves : neither require we of any of ours, in the confession of their faith, that they either renounce or in one word contest with the Church of England, whatsoever the world clamours of us in this way." [2] This indeed represents Robinson's more mature judgment. In 1606 he felt more bitterly towards the Church he left. But from the first the Separatists were looking forward to the positive good that they expected to flow from the enjoyment of their Christian liberty. They were eager to seek new experiences. Bernard, in his attempt to dissuade men from Separatism, urged the following wise caution : " Use the present

[1] John Cotton, *Way of the Congregational Churches*, p. 8.
[2] Robinson, vol. iii. p. 63.

good which thou mayest enjoy to the utmost, and an experienced good, before thou dost trouble thyself to seek for a supposed better good untried, which thou enjoyest not." Here we have the Puritan who feared to launch away. Robinson's reply is admirable, and reflects the spirit of the whole movement. "We must so enjoy experienced good things as we stock not ourselves in respect of other things as yet untried. We may not stint or circumscribe either our knowledge or faith or obedience within straiter bounds than the whole revealed will of God, in the knowledge and obedience whereof we must daily increase and edify ourselves: much less must we suffer ourselves to be stripped of any liberty which Christ our Lord hath purchased for us and given us to use for our good." [1] John Smyth had also impressed upon Bernard the gains of freedom. "If you find truth in [our arguments]," he says, "embrace the truth and lead on your people with you to the truth: if not, let us hear from you an answer that we may see our errors and we will and can reform: so cannot you so long as you stand as you do: *there is no way to reform but to separate, as we have done already.*" As men read their Bibles for themselves, they caught sight of truths which they were eager to test in practice. The only way to achieve this was to separate.

In the realm of religious reform, Elizabeth had tried to play the part of Canute, and with Canute's success. The Separatists felt the tide of the Reformation still running strongly. They were carried

[1] Robinson, vol. ii. p. 23.

forward with an unexhausted impulse. They were the spiritual counterpart to the men who explored the New World, the men with whose work their own was to be so strangely and fortunately linked. They were launching out on the deep sea of God's Word.

CHAPTER III

THE SECOND VENTURE AND THE CAUSE OF IT

"After they had continued together about a year, and kept their meetings every Sabbath in one place or other, exercising the worship of God amongst themselves notwithstanding all the diligence and malice of their adversaries, they, seeing they could no longer continue in that condition, they resolved to get over into Holland as they could : which was in the year 1607 or 1608." In this way William Bradford, in his *History*, introduces the narrative of their second venture, their removal into Holland. It is clear from his record that the Churches of Gainsborough and Scrooby, though legally liable to banishment, were not actually banished. Their decision to go was their own: in this sense they were voluntary exiles. They were not driven from the land, in the sense of being obliged, like earlier Separatists, to abjure the realm. And William Bradford makes equally clear the main motive or occasion of their going. Things were becoming so uncomfortable for them that they could no longer succeed in holding their meetings with any regularity or any hope of freedom from molestation. They decided to leave England in order to enjoy the advantages offered by Dutch toleration.

William Bradford gives a general impression of the increasing difficulty of their position, without entering into details. They had for years faced the scoffing and derision of neighbours, and they were used to the vexation of "apparitors, pursuivants, and comissary courts." But in 1607 "they could not long continue in any peaceable condition, but were hunted and persecuted on every side, so as their former afflictions were but as flea-bitings in comparison of these which now came upon them. For some were taken and clapt up in prison, others had their houses beset and watched night and day and hardly escaped their hands: and the most were faine to fly and leave their houses and habitations and the means of their livelihood. Yet these and many other sharper things which afterward befell them were no other than they looked for, and therefore were the better prepared to bear them by the assistance of God's grace and spirit." [1] Some further details can be gleaned from the records in York registry of the Ecclesiastical Causes Commission Court for the Northern Province. Under date November 10th, 1607, there is a full entry of proceedings against Gervase Nevyle of Scrooby.[2] He was committed to York Prison, and was there in the following March. On his release he succeeded in making his way to Amsterdam. Other members of the Scrooby Church were dealt with later on in the same year. On December 1st,

[1] Bradford, p. 10.

[2] Dr. Usher says that Nevyle "seems to have first denied the charge" of being a Barrowist or Brownist. There is no hint of such a denial in the official record as cited by Dexter, *The England and Holland of the Pilgrims*, p. 392.

1607, Richard Jackson and William Brewster failed to appear in answer to processes served on them, though according to the record they had given their word to appear. On December 15th further proceedings were undertaken against Brewster and Jackson. "An attachment was awarded to W. Blanchard to apprehend them, but he certifieth that he cannot find them nor understand where they are." Fines of £20 had been imposed. On April 22nd, 1608, the names of Jackson and Brewster again appeared in the records of the court, together with the name of Robert Rochester, also of Scrooby. Once more fines of £20 are imposed. A little before this, on March 30th, Brewster received as postmaster £73—his salary for two years then ending.[1] Perhaps he was lucky to get it. He was out of his office certainly by September 1608 when his successor Francis Hall took up his duties. Probably he had resigned some months earlier. In any case, Brewster and some other influential members of the group were in imminent danger of arrest. The whole group had lost its centre, and was likely to lose its being. Their life as a Church was in process of suffocation. They were an illegal and proscribed community, with no hope of toleration in their native country. It was only a question of months before the authorities would take action and imprison or banish their leaders.

It is possible that they exaggerated their immediate danger. In the province of York further action by the Court might have been postponed. But the folk at Scrooby did not know or believe

[1] Dexter, p. 401, for this and previous details.

this, and in any case they did not care to continue a precarious existence on the temporary connivance of the authorities. They judged that their situation had become impossible, and that they had best anticipate the full measure of legal penalty to which they were liable. They did not wait for persecution to become extreme. Since the authorities were definitely on their track, they decided to go to Holland as soon as they could. Their decision was also influenced by the experience of Henry Barrow's Church. This Church had been exiled in 1593, and was now living in Amsterdam, where they enjoyed liberty of worship. There seemed no good reason to repeat their history exactly. The period of prolonged imprisonment which the followers of Barrow had undergone the men of Scrooby thought they might legitimately avoid. They resolved to remove as a community while it was in their power to do so, and not to wait for the State to thrust out of the land such as were not broken in prison. They went into exile because of persecution, and to avoid further and heavier persecution. Their course may not have been the most heroic: it did, however, require courage and involve sacrifice, and it was certainly intelligible and justifiable.

There is, then, no real doubt as to the difficulties of their situation in 1607, and no obscurity about the motive which prompted their second venture. It would not be necessary to discuss the matter at any greater length if Dr. Roland Usher, an American historian who has recently turned his attention to the Pilgrims to some purpose, had not questioned this obvious account of the facts and

sought to substitute another interpretation, which is being accepted as final on his authority. Dr. Usher is anxious to discount the element of persecution, and especially the element of official persecution, as a factor in the history of the Pilgrims at this crisis. On the other hand, Dr. Usher stresses the element of annoyance from local critics. He thinks that to the men at Scrooby, "daily nagging, scoffing, and deriding was the most difficult of persecutions to endure." The official proceedings at York were by no means severe. "Neville was handled with considerable charity." "The proceedings against Brewster, Johnson [*sic*], and Rochester were the merest routine." "The Puritans in the South completely disregarded such simple steps as these." Consequently Dr. Usher thinks that the removal to Holland must not be regarded as "a mere flight from implacable authorities or the simple expression of the fear of the consequences likely to be visited upon them for remaining in England." Dr. Usher contends that we shall not properly understand this exodus unless we see that the Pilgrims were fleeing from contamination. "England was unclean. . . . All was wrong, all was uncongenial, unclean, and from it they flee. . . . The Pilgrims voluntarily left England to avoid contact both with the Church and with the Puritans who accepted it. . . . To remain in contact with [the Church] was to risk defilement. . . . They were seeking no mere temporal peace, no mere freedom from courts and Bishops in a temporal sense, no mere toleration of Nonconformity, but a pure and congenial atmosphere uncontaminated by

heresy and anti-Christ. . . . The same impulse which now led them to leave England later caused them to leave Holland. . . . Indeed the Puritans and Bishops taunted the Pilgrims with running away from a persecution which did not exist, with silly fears of little things, with an insistence upon indifferent matters. One and all the Separatists denied stoutly that they left because they were afraid, because they were driven out, or because the temporal persecutions were severe. One and all they asseverated solemnly their deep conviction that association with Church or Puritans was dangerous to spiritual welfare, was a compromise with Truth, a failure to observe God's ordinances." [1]

This discovery of the real motive of the removal to Holland is Dr. Usher's most novel contribution to the story of the Pilgrim Fathers. It has been hailed by reviewers in this country as a revelation of the inner springs of the movement. Thus the reviewer in the *Times' Literary Supplement* (July 3rd, 1919) is delighted to get rid of the prejudices of partisan and patriotic history. " The pure religion of a group of saints and heroes was accepted as the main cause of this migration, in conflict with a hard-hearted and cruel generation of English, by whom God's chosen people were driven first to Holland and then to Cape Cod." But all this can now be discarded as a myth. The reviewer then sums up the impression derived from Dr. Usher's book in the following terms : " Exclusive Bible study drove small groups in divers parts of England

[1] R. G. Usher, *The Pilgrims and their Story*, Chap. II, esp. pp. 23 and 26.

to desire a far more theocratic form of government than seemed possible in conjunction with the continued influence and power of the Anglican Church. They literally wanted government by God, for God, and through God, and they discovered very little of it in their neighbourhood. The Puritans, generally so-called, seemed to them hardly less recalcitrant to the polity prescribed in the Old Testament than did the Bishops and their easy-going flocks of the English churches themselves. As for toleration, it was anathema to them. What they wanted was freedom, above all freedom not to tolerate. This easy-going toleration was the source of all the backsliding in the England of that day. The congregation which formed the nucleus of the Plymouth Settlers was thus a group of theocratic reactionaries who wanted to go back to early mediæval ideas, and to set up a little Zoar in the wilderness as inaccessible to the ungodly as Geneva was in its palmiest days of persecution." The writer of this paragraph can have but a very small acquaintance with the writings of the Pilgrim Fathers, or he would scarcely have committed himself to so many simple blunders. If he had looked into John Robinson's *Essays*, with their wealth of quotation from the classics, or if he had read Bradford's *History*, and noted the interesting references which he makes there to Plato and Livy, or if he had glanced through the list of William Brewster's library, he would never have described these men as exclusive Bible students. To represent them as standing for "the polity prescribed in the Old Testament" argues a complete misun-

derstanding of Separatist principles. They were less under the influence of the Old Testament than were the Puritans. It was of the essence of the Separatist position that it was no longer possible to identify the Church and the civil society in the way in which they had been identified in the history of Israel. It would be difficult to give a grosser caricature of the Pilgrim Fathers than is presented in this review in the *Times Literary Supplement.* It would not be fair to father on Dr. Usher the mistakes of this reviewer, but it is the kind of impression his book is creating, and he must be held in part responsible, since the reviewer in question appears to be in the main dependent on Dr. Usher for his information.

A review of Dr. Usher's book which appeared in *The Spectator* (March 29th, 1919) gave the same sort of interpretation of the flight of the Scrooby Church : " The faithful who gathered round John Robinson in William Brewster's house at Scrooby about this time were driven to Holland in 1607 not by the intolerance of the Church, but by their own intolerance. They went to Amsterdam and thence to Leyden, not because the Court of High Commission persecuted them, but because they believed that their spiritual welfare would be endangered by further contact with English churchmen, even if they were Puritans. They left Leyden for America to escape the contaminating influences of other Protestant sects, and to find a sequestered corner of the world where they could practise their peculiar tenets in isolation. It is pleasant to find an American author exculpating the Jacobean

Church of England on the charge of persecution." Manifestly Dr. Usher's view is being so favourably received by presumably competent authorities that it requires more detailed examination.

If we are to accept Dr. Usher's view, we must suppose that he understands the followers of John Robinson better than they understood themselves. The motive for flight which he belittles is the motive which they uniformly assert : the motive which he attributes to them, and repeatedly emphasises, is a motive which they nowhere affirm, and almost explicitly deny. Dr. Usher tells us that " One and all the Separatists denied stoutly that they left because they were afraid, because they were driven out, or because the temporal persecutions were severe." So far as my present reading extends, I have not found a single instance of this universal denial. On the contrary, the Separatists with whose writings I am acquainted, all attribute their exile to persecution, and all complain of the severity of the persecution. We have seen already how Bradford presents the matter. He gives no hint of this necessity of leaving England because it was unclean, and set down the growing intensity of persecution as the sole motive of their action. John Robinson's view of the matter is not in doubt. In replying to Mr. Bernard, who said it was very wrong to migrate to Holland, Robinson wrote as follows : " And for the leading of the people out of one nation into another of a strange language it is our great cross, but no sin at all, and should rather move you and others to compassion toward us than thus to insult over us in our exile. *But*

your addition that we do this without compulsion is most shameless, you yourself both beholding and furthering our most violent persecution. But see your equal dealing with us: whilst we tarried in the kingdom you blamed us because we got us not gone, now we are gone you find fault we tarry not." [1] The only support for Dr. Usher's view will be found in the shameless innuendoes of men like Bernard. Robinson continues: "Reason see I none why this man should thus blame us for our flying, except with the Montanists he thought flight in the time of persecution unlawful." Robinson then was evidently under the impression that they went into exile during and because of persecution. In this matter the Scrooby Church associated itself with the Church under Johnson and Ainsworth, which had been forcibly expelled the country. They were all alike in exile for conscience' sake, "some banished and some otherwise," but all the victims of persecution.

After they had been a few years in Holland there arose among the Separatists some question as to the legitimacy of flight in persecution. Robinson dealt with the subject in a treatise on religious communion printed in 1614, and the discussion shows how he regarded the persecution to which they were exposed in 1607. Their flight was condemned by some on the ground that the Apostolic Churches did not leave the cities in which they were planted, and Paul and Barnabas actually returned to the places where they had been persecuted. Robinson replies that the cir-

[1] Robinson, *Works*, vol. ii. p. 67.

cumstances are very different. The Apostolic Churches knew not whither to go to be better. They could not flee. "Neither was their persecution such but that they might enjoy their mutual fellowship and ministers, and bring up their children and families in the information of the Lord and His truth, though with great persecution, even of some particular men unto death at times and by occasions, *which in England all men know we could not possibly do.*" [1] As to the apostles at Iconium and Lystra and Derbe, Robinson notes that "their persecutions in those places had been but by the tumultuous multitude by the provocation of the Jews, which like a tempest were soon over, and *not by any stablished laws or settled course of justice.*" [1] From these passages it is plain that it was precisely the official sanction of persecution, the attitude of the Jacobean Church and State, which led the Pilgrim Fathers to retire to Holland and justified their flight to their own minds. It is also plain that the persecution had reached the point which made their continued existence as a Church impossible. They would never have fled to avoid contamination, or to escape nagging, scoffing, and deriding. Curiously enough, Robinson also urges that "flight is allowed, nay required, against natural fear and many other both conveniences and evils, ordinarily, in persecution." So far, then, from stoutly denying that they were afraid, Robinson suggests that their flight may even have been in part a concession to natural fear. Robinson nowhere claims any great courage for his people.

[1] Robinson, iii. p. 162.

They were certainly a cautious and perhaps a timorous folk. They did not owe their achievement to natural daring. It appears, then, that no one of the stout denials which Dr. Usher attributes to the Separatists can be found in Robinson. He is not ashamed to admit that they fled because they were afraid. He asserts that they fled under compulsion, that they were driven out. He describes the persecution from which they fled as severe and even violent.

Unfortunately for those who wish to test his theories, Dr. Usher is somewhat sparing in his references to original authorities. But at the close of the paragraph in which he tells us that Separatists one and all denied that they were afraid, that they were driven out, or that their temporal persecutions were severe, while they with equal unanimity asseverate their deep conviction that association with Church or Puritans was dangerous to spiritual welfare, he appends a footnote to the effect that "the controversial literature is full of material on this point." It is not quite clear what point is meant, whether it is only the asseveration or the denial or both. But it is legitimate to look for evidence both for the Separatists' stout denials and their solemn asseveration in the literature to which Dr. Usher refers. He directs attention in particular to the *Confessio Fidei Anglorum Quorundam in Belgia Exulantium*, 1598, and to Robinson's *Answer to a Censorious Epistle*. Since he appeals to these documents in particular it is worth while to examine their evidence.

Turning first to the Confession of Faith, which,

as has been already noted, represents the Church gathered under Johnson and Ainsworth, we find the following references to persecution, on pages 10 and 11 of the preface: "To these churches, ministers, and service must all the people there [in England] come every day; yea, though they have in the next parish a preacher, and in their own a dumb unlearned priest, yet are they all tied to their own Church and minister, and must at the least twice a year receive the sacrament at his hands. If they refuse this, or do not ordinarily come to their parish church, then are they summoned, excommunicated, and imprisoned until they become obedient. In this bondage are our countrymen there held under their priests and prelates, and such as by the Word of God witness and condemn against these abominations, they hate, punish, put to death, and persecute out of the land."

The second more extended reference is as follows: "Thus seest thou briefly, good Christian reader, the things which we mislike in the Church of England, and for which we have separated ourselves as God commandeth. To all these, if we were amongst them, should we be forced to submit our bodies and souls, or else suffer violence at the hands of the Prelates, and end our lives by violent death or most miserable imprisonment, as many of our brethren before us have done. For so great is the malice and power of these Romish priests that they persecute unto death such as speak against them, and such poor Christians as they cast into their noisome prisons can seldom or never get out except with shipwreck of conscience, until they be

carried forth upon the bier." After picturing the evil case of Separatists in prison, the authors of the preface add: "And that they may the more readily be starved or weakened in the truth, they are commonly shut up in close prison, their friends and acquaintance being not suffered to come at them, nay, even their wives and children being kept and debarred from them by the tyranny of these bloody prelates and their instruments: whose hard hearts and unnatural cruelty if thou didst understand (gentle reader) as many of us have felt, and to this day yet feel, it would make thy heart to bleed, considering their unmerciful and barbarous dealing." It is difficult to trace in such passages the stout denial of the severity of their persecutions, which, Dr. Usher assures us, the Separatists one and all made. It is also apparent that these men did not leave England for fear of contamination. They would only too gladly have stayed to witness against the abomination they thought they saw in the Church. They left England because they were compelled to do so.

These were Elizabethan victims, and Dr. Usher's reference to their Confession may have been oversight. Does his view obtain any more support from Robinson's *Answer to a Censorious Epistle*? It is true that Robinson here says little about the persecution from which he had just fled. But he does happen to deny expressly the motive for flight which Dr. Usher attributes to him. Joseph Hall, who was later the famous Bishop of Norwich, was the author of the censorious epistle, and he had upbraided Robinson with his flight.

"This is the valour of Christian teachers, to oppose abuses, not to run away from them. Where shall you not thus find Babylon? Either run out of the world or your flight is in vain. If experience of change teach you not that you shall find your Babylon everywhere, return not. Compare the place you have left with that you have chosen: . . . Lo! there a common harbour of all opinions, of all heresies, if not a mixture: here you draw in the free and clear air of the Gospel, without that odious composition of Judaism, Arianism and Anabaptism: there, you live in the stench of these, and more . . . say, if you can, that the Church of England . . . is not a heaven to Amsterdam."[1]

It will be observed that Joseph Hall writes on Dr. Usher's assumption that John Robinson and his Church withdrew, not to escape persecution, but to avoid contamination. Robinson scornfully repudiates the suggestion. "We, indeed, have much wickedness in the city where we live: you, in the Church: but in earnest do you imagine we account the Kingdom of England 'Babylon' or the city of Amsterdam 'Sion'? It is the Church of England, or State-ecclesiastical, which we account Babylon: and from which we withdraw in spiritual communion. But for the Commonwealth and Kingdom, *as we honour it above all the States in the world, so would we thankfully embrace the meanest corner in it, at the extremest conditions of any people in the kingdom.* The hellish impieties in the city of Amsterdam do no more prejudice our heavenly communion in the Church of Christ than the frogs,

[1] Robinson, vol. iii. p. 403.

lice, flies, murrain, and other plagues overspreading Egypt, did the Israelites. . . ." [1]

I fail to see how, in the face of such a passage, it is possible to assert that they left England because they thought England unclean, or because they feared defilement. It is also a patent absurdity to suggest that they went to Holland hoping to find there a pure and congenial atmosphere uncontaminated by heresy and Antichrist. Brewster had been to Holland, and knew well enough that Amsterdam was not Zion. Dr. Usher's discovery is simply a repetition of Hall's idle rhetoric. All that Robinson wanted was toleration in England, and he wanted that above all things. Nor is this an isolated revelation of the longing with which the Separatists regarded the country they had been forced to abandon. Here is a striking passage from a humble Separatist, a sailor named William Euring. He wrote in 1619 : " Not only I myself but all of us that now are separated from you [in the Church of England], would much more willingly and gladly return again and labor to plant ourselves again in the meanest part of England, to enjoy peace with holiness and to follow the truth in love among our kindred and friends in our own native country, than either to continue where now many of us yet live, or to plant ourselves in Virginia or in any other country in the world upon any conditions or hope of any thing in this life whatsoever." [2] Robinson says exactly the same thing in his treatise of religious communion : " Now touching our country

[1] Robinson, vol. iii. p. 417.

[2] Burrage, *The Early English Dissenters*, vol. i. p. 192.

and friends, our answer is that we deem the want of them a grievous loss, which we would also redeem at a great rate. Yet for our country, we do not forsake it, but are by it forsaken and impelled by most extreme laws and violent proscriptions contrived and executed by the prelates and on their behalf." [1] This was the normal attitude of the exiled Separatists. To say that they fled England as unclean is simply not true. To say that they were not seeking mere temporal peace, freedom from courts and bishops in a temporal sense, toleration of nonconformity, is simply not true. It was precisely this that they desired—this and nothing else so far as the authorities in Church and State were concerned, and they left England because this was denied them, and for no other reason.

It may also be worth while to point out that Dr. Usher's view rests on a total misconception of the principle of separation as the exiled Churches understood it. It is a commonplace that all Separatists asseverate solemnly their deep conviction that association with the Church or Puritans was dangerous to spiritual welfare. But by association they did not mean geographical proximity or contact in civil life; they meant simply and solely religious or spiritual communion. Now Dr. Usher's view assumes that separation means avoiding social and even physical contact with Churchmen and Puritans. No Separatist ever dreamt of such an absurd fanaticism. They did not wish to avoid the Puritans or Churchmen. They wished to convert them. I am confident that Dr. Usher cannot

[1] Robinson, vol. iii. p. 155.

produce a single passage from any Separatist writing in support of his curious theory. He may, of course, be correct in his contention that the actual proceedings taken against the Scrooby Church were perfunctory and half-hearted. This is beside the point, because the question before us is not whether the persecution was actually severe or not, but whether the persecution, severe or light, serious or perfunctory, was or was not the actual cause which determined the Pilgrim Fathers to leave England. There is no shadow of doubt that it was. Nor do the considerations which Dr. Usher advances to minimise the actual persecution altogether favour his case. He insists that Bancroft's regime was not so harsh as we have hitherto supposed, and that he had great success in inducing the Puritan clergy to accept it. But, the greater his success in securing the acquiescence of the Puritans, the greater the annoyance that would be felt at the recrudescence of Separatism under such leaders as John Smyth and John Robinson. When once their Churches were discovered, a ruthless suppression was highly probable. So the Churches themselves judged, and, though they may have acted precipitately, they were in a better position to know the intentions of the ecclesiastical authorities than we are. A man like William Brewster probably gauged the significance of the warnings from York with fair accuracy. In spite of Dr. Usher's reasoning, it remains true that " they left England because they were not allowed to stay, because men of their opinions were persecuted by Church and State alike."

There is one other point in Dr. Usher's treatment of the subject to which we may here make a brief reference. He says, "The same impulse which now led them to leave England later caused them to leave Holland." It is possible to give a meaning to the term "impulse" which will save the truth of this sentence. In both cases they desired to preserve their identity as a community and to enjoy their church-fellowship undisturbed. But in the context in which it appears in Dr. Usher's book the sentence is misleading. The circumstances under which they left Holland, and the circumstances under which they left England, were almost entirely different. We shall later consider the reasons which determined some of them to leave Holland. These reasons had little or nothing in common with the necessity that made them leave England. Nor did these reasons include a desire "to escape the contaminating influences of other Protestant sects and to find a sequestered corner of the world where they could practise their peculiar tenets in isolation." The reviewers who have so eagerly followed Dr. Usher's lead have mistaken his sobriety of tone for soundness of judgment and the faintness of his praise for the impartiality of truth. He has not really succeeded in exculpating the Jacobean Church from the charge of persecution. He has only given a fresh lease of life to slanders and misunderstandings which attended the Separatists from the first, and which they from the first completely refuted and exposed.

When the Churches at Gainsborough and Scrooby had resolved to face the hard necessity of leaving

England, and to anticipate the full rigours of persecution by flight to Holland, they found no small difficulty in giving effect to their resolution. They could not leave the country without permission, and the authorities did not approve of men and money leaving the country. Dr. Usher observes truly that this embargo was based on economic policy, and he deduces wrongly that the difficulties of the little group in getting away were not a form of religious persecution. "Certain that permission to emigrate would be refused, primarily on economic grounds, they resolved to go without permission, and were forced to flee like 'criminals or conspirators.'" [1] It is obvious that the unwillingness of Brewster and others to apply for permission to emigrate did not arise from fear of an economic embargo. The evidence offered in Appendix I makes it clear that the watch was set for them to carry out ecclesiastical rather than economic policy.

They wished to go as a company if possible, or at least in fairly large groups. This was a bold design, and difficult to execute. It probably reflects the strength of their community spirit. They did not leave each member to transport himself and his family as best he could. The strong helped the infirmities of the weak. Mr. Robinson and Mr. Brewster were among the last to arrive in Amsterdam because they "stayed to help the weakest over before them." They must have carried out the policy which John Penry recommended to the Barrowists in a letter he wrote to them from prison,

[1] Usher, p. 27.

when the prospect of banishment was close upon them : " My good Brethren,—Seeing banishment, with loss of goods, likely to betide you, prepare yourselves for this hard entreaty ; and rejoice that you are made worthy for Christ's cause to suffer and bear all these things. And I beseech you, in the bowels of Jesus Christ, that none of you in this case look upon his particular estate, but regard the general state of the Church of God : that the same may go and be kept together whithersoever it shall please God to send you. Oh ! the blessing will be great that shall ensue this case. Whereas, if you go every man to provide for his own house and to look for his own family, first neglecting poor Zion, the Lord will set His face against and scatter you from the one end of heaven to the other : neither shall you find a resting-place for the soles of your feet, nor a blessing upon anything that you take in hand. . . . Let not those of you, then, that either have stocks in your hands or some likely trades to live by, dispose of yourselves where it may be most commodious for your outward estate : and in the meantime suffer the poor ones, that have no such means, either to bear the whole work on their mean shoulders, or to end their days in sorrow and mourning for want of outward and inward comforts in the land of strangers : for the Lord will be the avenger of all such dealings. But consult with the whole Church, yea, with the brethren of other places, how the Church may be kept together and built, whithersoever they go. Let not the poor and the friendless be forced to stay behind here and to break a good conscience

for want of your support and kindness unto them that they may go with you." [1] Whether Robinson actually knew this letter, he and his friends certainly acted in the spirit of it. They were resolved that their Church should go together and be kept together. The poor and friendless were not to be forced to stay behind.

To arrange transport for a large company without arousing suspicion was anything but easy. Their first attempt miscarried, and is thus described by Bradford: "There was a large company of them purposed to get passage at Boston in Lincolnshire, and for that end had hired a ship wholly to themselves, and made agreement with the master to be ready at a certain day, and take them and their goods in, at a convenient place, where they accordingly would all attend in readiness. So after long waiting, and large expenses, though he kept not day with them, yet he came at length and took them in, in the night. But when he had them and their goods aboard, he betrayed them, having beforehand complotted with the searchers and other officers so to do; who took them, and put them into open boats, and there rifled and ransacked them, searching them to their shirts for money, yea, even the women further than became modesty; and then carried them back into the town, and made them a spectacle and wonder to the multitude, which came flocking on all sides to behold them. Being thus first, by the catchpoule officers, rifled, and stript of their money, books, and much other goods, they were presented to the magistrates, and

[1] Waddington, *Congregational History*, 1567–1700, pp. 88, 89.

messengers sent to inform the Lords of the Council of them; and so they were committed to ward. Indeed the magistrates used them courteously, and shewed them what favour they could; but could not deliver them, till order came from the Council-table. But the issue was that, after a month's imprisonment, the greatest part were dismissed, and sent to the places from whence they came; but seven of the principal were still kept in prison, and bound over to the Assizes." [1]

A second attempt was eventually more successful, though even more hazardous. Bradford thus describes the voyage of the ship in which he himself probably got over to Holland [2]: "The next spring after, there was another attempt made by some of these, and others, to get over at another place. And it so fell out, that they light of a Dutchman at Hull, having a ship of his own belonging to Zealand; they made agreement with him, and acquainted him with their condition, hoping to find more faithfulness in him than in the former of their own nation. He bade them not fear, for he would do well enough. He was by appointment to take them in between Grimsby and Hull, where was a large common a good way distant from any town. Now against the prefixed time, the women and children, with the goods, were sent to the place in a small barque, which they had hired for that end; and the men were to meet them by land. But it so fell out, that they were there a day before the ship came, and, the sea being rough, and the women very sick, prevailed with the seamen to put

[1] Bradford, p. 12. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 13, 14.

into a creek hard by, where they lay on ground at low-water. The next morning the ship came, but they were fast, and could not stir till about noon. In the meantime the shipmaster, perceiving how the matter was, sent his boat to be getting the men aboard, whom he saw ready, walking about the shore. But after the first boat-full was got aboard, and she was ready to go for more, the master espied a great company, both horse and foot, with bills and guns and other weapons ; for the country was raised to take them. The Dutchman, seeing that, swore his country's oath, ' Sacremente,' and, having the wind fair, waiged his anchor, hoised sails, and away. But the poor men which were got aboard were in great distress for their wives and children, which they saw thus to be taken, and were left destitute of their helps ; and themselves also, not having a cloath to shift them with, more than they had on their backs, and some scarce a penny about them, all they had being aboard the barque. It drew tears from their eyes, and anything they had they would have given to have been ashore again ; but all in vain ; there was no remedy, they must thus sadly part. And afterward endured a fearful storm at sea, being fourteen days or more before they arrived at their port, in seven whereof they neither saw sun, moon, nor stars, and were driven near the coast of Norway, the mariners themselves often despairing of life ; and once with shrieks and cries gave over all, as if the ship had been foundered in the sea, and they sinking without recovery. But when man's hope and help wholly failed, the Lord's

power and mercy appeared in their recovery; for the ship rose again, and gave the mariners courage again to manage her. And if modesty would suffer me, I might declare with what fervent prayers they cried unto the Lord in this great distress, especially some of them, even without any great distraction, when the water ran into their mouths and ears; and the mariners cried out, 'We sink, we sink'; they cried (if not with miraculous, yet with a great height or degree of divine faith), 'Yet, Lord, Thou canst save; yet, Lord, Thou canst save'; with such other expressions as I will forbear. Upon which the ship did not only recover, but shortly after the violence of the storm began to abate, and the Lord filled their afflicted minds with such comforts as everyone cannot understand, and in the end brought them to their desired haven, where the people came flocking, admiring their deliverance, the storm having been so long and sore, in which much hurt had been done, as the master's friends related unto him in their congratulations." [1]

He likewise relates what happened to those who had the misfortune to be left behind: "But to return to the others where we left. The rest of the men that were in greatest danger, made shift to escape away before the troup could surprise them: those only staying that best might, to be assistant unto the women. But pitiful it was to see the heavy case of these poor women in their distress; what weeping and crying on every side, some for their husbands, that were carried away in the ship as is before related; others not knowing

[1] Bradford, pp. 13, 14.

what should become of them and their little ones; others again melted in tears, seeing their poor little ones hanging about them, crying for fear, and quaking with cold. Being thus apprehended, they were hurried from one place to another, and from one justice to another, till in the end they knew not what to do with them; for to imprison so many women and innocent children for no other cause (many of them) but that they must go with their husbands seemed to be unreasonable, and all would cry out of them; and to send them home again was as difficult, for they alleged, as the truth was, that they had no homes to go to, for they had either sold or otherwise disposed of their houses and livings. To be short, after they had been thus turmoiled a good while, and conveyed from one constable to another, they were glad to be rid of them in the end upon any terms; for all were wearied and tired with them. Though in the meantime they (poor souls) endured misery enough; and thus in the end necessity forced a way for them." [1]

But at last the whole company, some hundred strong, gathered together in Amsterdam towards the close of 1608. The second venture had been successfully accomplished.

[1] Bradford, p. 15.

CHAPTER IV

WHAT BEFELL THEM IN HOLLAND

ARRIVED in Amsterdam in August 1608, the little company from Scrooby had both to maintain and to justify their existence. The first problem was economic. How were they to earn a living in a strange land, and in a trading community instead of in the country-side ? The second problem was moral and religious. How should they order their lives so as to commend to others the step which they had taken ?

We may consider the second problem and their solution of it before we describe their fight with poverty, because in their own eyes the second question was even more important than the first. So far as the literary defence of their separation and removal was concerned, they could safely entrust their cause to the pen of John Robinson. He answered the strictures of Joseph Hall and Richard Bernard with a thoroughness which made the continuance of controversy superfluous. But the liberated Church was well aware that their real justification must be found, not in tracts, but in conduct. William Bradford treasured a saying of John Smyth's, which belonged to this time : " Truly we being now come into a place of liberty

are in great danger, if we look not well to our ways: for we are like men set upon the ice and therefore may easily slide or fall." [1] What use would they make of their freedom? Had they positive principles which would find expression in a healthy community life?

The first practical issue which those who came over with Brewster and Robinson had to face was this: Should they link up with the Ancient Separatist Church, under the leadership of Francis Johnson and Henry Ainsworth, or should they reunite with those who came from Gainsborough, and take John Smyth as their pastor, or should they continue to exist as a distinct body and gather a new Church? They decided on the third alternative, for reasons which led them in the course of a few months to leave Amsterdam and settle in Leyden.

The history of the Barrowist exiles under Johnson, though not so scandalous as its detractors represented it to be, was somewhat disheartening for those who believed that freedom to follow the example of the primitive Church would produce all the graces of the Christian character. This first Separatist Church in Amsterdam had been full of unrest and contention almost since its final settlement in the Dutch capital about 1596. The first serious trouble arose over the offence which the congregation took at the dress of the pastor's wife. While in prison in 1594, Francis Johnson married Mrs. Thomasina Boys. She was the widow of a

[1] Bradford, *Dialogue*, in Young's *Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers*, p. 450.

wealthy merchant, and was able to live in a style quite out of keeping with the dire poverty of most of the exiles. Henry Barrow himself had set a brave example of generosity. Bradford tells us: "He was very comfortable to the poor and those in distress in their sufferings: and when he saw he must die, he gave a stock for the relief of the poor of the Church, which was a help to them in their banished condition afterwards." The conduct of the new pastor's wife contrasted unfavourably with Barrow's example. But the church-members seem to have resented the lady's retention of fashions usual in her station even more than her possible lack of charity in the presence of poverty. George Johnson, the brother of Francis, undertook to voice the feelings of the members. "He wrote to Francis, protesting against [his wife's] gold rings, her busks and her whalebones, which were so manifest that 'many of ye saints were greeved'; he begged that her schowish hat might be exchanged for a sober taffety or felt: and he even offered to raise money to provide her with more suitable garments should the question of expense stand in her way. She did reform a little: her hat was not 'so topishly set,' and George was encouraged to hope for further reforms: but when members of the congregation urged him on to more complaints the pastor's wife became 'very peert and coppet.'" [1]

All this had taken place in London. When they removed to Amsterdam the trouble was renewed. George became more violent and per-

[1] Cockshott, p. 89.

sonal, and outran the feeling of the Church. He charged his sister-in-law "amongst other things with sin in the using of musk and wearing of a topish hat, and he was not inclined to withdraw his charges. The poor lady seems to have been unfortunate in her choice of headgear, for a 'velvet hood' was also a cause of contention. The Church, after deliberation, declared the hat to be 'not topish in nature,' whereupon a lengthy discussion ensued as to whether a hat not topish in nature could, under any circumstances, be considered topish, it having been particularly condemned in her as the pastor's wife." [1] The quarrel became so heated that at length, in 1599, Francis excommunicated his brother George. Later on he was under the still more painful necessity of excommunicating his father. These proceedings naturally did not commend the Church and its way to Christian people or to the general public.

Even more trivial disputes followed, in particular a controversy between Hugh Broughton and Ainsworth in 1605, as to whether Aaron's ephod was made of silk or wool. This gave the Church an unenviable reputation. "There were more Disputes, Contests, and Quarrels amongst the few Brownists and other Independent Sectaries which resorted thither [*i.e.* to Holland] the latter end of Queen Elizabeth's, King James the First's time, and so on, than among the whole Dutch Nation ever since they Reform'd: 'Tis unaccountable what impertinent controversies arose between them, even to the Colour of Aaron's Ephod,

[1] Cockshott, pp. 89, 90.

whether it were Blew or a Sea-green, which made an irreconcilable difference between their Pastors, and consequently the Flocks divided." [1]

At the time that the pilgrims from Scrooby arrived in Amsterdam, the fame and internal condition of the Ancient Church might well give cause for anxiety, and make union with the Barrowists unwise. There were charges of harbouring immoral persons in the Church, which had not been satisfactorily cleared. There were also grave differences of opinion among the members as to the exercise of authority within the Church. Francis Johnson, in the light of his experience of congregational censures, tended more and more to concentrate authority in the hands of the elders and ministers. He held that the elders, once appointed, were in office for life, and were practical autocrats. On this issue Johnson and Ainsworth were later to part company. The controversy had not reached its height in the autumn of 1608, but Robinson and Brewster saw what was coming. They had no desire to sail on such troubled waters. They entertained a real respect for the Ancient Church, as it was called. Bradford gives an appreciative account of its life and order. Those who followed Robinson to Leyden acknowledged Johnson's Church as a Church, and retained communion with it; but they did not wish to be drawn into its internal divisions. They did not even desire to take sides and express a judgment from without. They had an intense longing for peace, for a chance

[1] Baron, *Dutch Way of Tolerance*, p. 10, quoted in Dexter, p. 410.

to develop their own life as a community in quietness. Consequently, they did not unite themselves to the earlier Church, and in May 1609 migrated to Leyden to avoid entanglement in its controversies, which they felt hampered them and compromised their cause.

If they were not prepared to throw in their lot with Johnson and Ainsworth, it was still open to them to continue in communion with John Smyth. John Smyth and the company from Gainsborough had arrived in Amsterdam at least six months, and possibly a year, before the sister-Church from Scrooby. The example and influence of John Smyth might help to determine the later arrivals to refrain from joining the older Separatist Church. But the period of dissociation during which John Smyth, to the distress of Richard Clyfton, had begun to develop some of his Baptist opinions, also made the Scrooby group unwilling to unite with the exiles from Gainsborough. So they decided to stand by themselves and form the third Separatist English Church in Amsterdam.

When they removed to Leyden in the spring of 1609 Richard Clyfton, who was somewhat advanced in years, determined to remain in Amsterdam. He and possibly some others joined Johnson's Church, in which he accepted the office of reader, when Ainsworth withdrew over the question of the power entrusted to the eldership. Other Scrooby members, notably Gervase Neville, followed John Smyth. Robinson now became pastor of the Pilgrim Church, and his was soon the dominant influence.

In this withdrawal to Leyden Dr. Usher discerns a further proof of the moral fastidiousness of the Pilgrim Church. "They knew themselves to be welcome [at Amsterdam], but they saw received with equal eagerness Anabaptists, Socinians, Jews, Arians, and Unitarians, heretics quite beyond the possibility of salvation, with whom contact was even more dangerous and contaminating than with Papists and Episcopalians. To fill their cup of woe to the full, they concluded regretfully that the English Separatist Churches of Johnson, Ainsworth, and Smyth were in grave danger of falling from grace, and that the Dutch Reformed Churches were blind to the Light in the Word of God. These could not be congenial associates. So they withdrew to Leyden, where they would have only the Dutch Reformed Church to contend with, and be free from cosmopolitan heretics and quarrelling Separatists."[1] The unsatisfactory character of this analysis of their motives is obvious. We have already seen that they were well aware of the presence of Jews, Arians,[2] and Anabaptists in Amsterdam when they went there. They were indifferent to their presence. They were quite willing to share the streets and the market-place with heretics and evildoers. "It is the will of God and of Christ that His Church should abide in the world and converse with it in the affairs thereof, which are common to both." Naturally they did not seek out evil company, and they knew

[1] Usher, p. 33.

[2] Dr. Usher piles on the agony by giving three names for the same sect—viz. Socinians, Arians, and Unitarians.

its dangers. But " a good and wise man will make use of all companies," and we must not " wrong human societies by being too divine." [1] They did not fear contamination from heretics, and this fear did not prompt their removal to Leyden. As to their attitude towards the Dutch Reformed Churches, we shall see in a moment that neither in Amsterdam nor in Leyden did they contend with their Dutch neighbours. Their differences from the Dutch Church had no bearing on the decision to leave Amsterdam. Indeed, they went rather because they did not wish to embarrass the authorities in Holland, and they perceived that, the quieter they were, the better they would show their appreciation of Dutch hospitality. It was certainly their regretful conclusion about the English Separatist Churches that determined them to settle in Leyden. Whether that conclusion is adequately described in Dr. Usher's generality about the danger of these Churches falling from grace the reader can now judge. The phrase seems to suggest that the Pilgrims condemned other Separatists, either out of priggishness or from devotion to theological niceties. The truth is that they withdrew because they were less stiff and rigid in discipline than Johnson and Ainsworth, and more cautious and sober in doctrine than Smyth. They felt (and who can deny that they were right ?) that they would better serve the common cause of Separatism by living out their own principles in a non-controversial spirit than by entangling themselves either

[1] Cf. Robinson's essay on " Society and Friendship," in *Works*, vol. i. p. 157 f.

with the censorious, contentious spirit of the Barrowists or with the rapid changes undergone by the followers of John Smyth.

It is important to observe the shape which Separatist principles took in the mind of John Robinson, and the form in which he presented them to his people. No one can study his works and not be impressed by his caution and fair-mindedness, his evident charity in judging, his unwillingness to press separation an inch farther than seemed absolutely necessary. No one can read the narratives of Bradford and Winslow and not realise that Robinson in a large measure succeeded in impressing these qualities on his people. The Pilgrims entered upon their "experiment in Church life," knowing that liberty has its dangers, and knowing also that it is easy to exaggerate the importance of truths for which you have suffered. They had a grave sense of responsibility, and they were determined not to discredit their liberty by factiousness and not to practise in the name of truth a rigidity that could not be defended in the name of love.

The great temptation of Separatists was to erect some particular ordinance of God in worship or discipline into a condition of Church membership or standard by which to judge and usually to condemn others. John Robinson was resolved not to suffer his friends to fall under this temptation. In one place he refers to those Separatists who are as sure of their own infallibility as the Papists are of the Pope's, "especially in such matters as for which they have suffered trouble and affliction formerly, and so, having bought them dear, they

value them highly. But it is too merchant-like, to strive to oversell a thing, which we have formerly overbought: we must buy the truth and not sell it at any rate; but must account nothing either true or good, according to the valuation which we have set upon it, but God." [1] In another passage he has the following fine "exhortation respecting ourselves who have by the mercy of God, with the faith of Christ, received His order and ordinances: which is, that we please not ourselves therein too much, as if in them piety and religion did chiefly consist: which was not the least calamity of the Lord's people of old, for which He also sharply reproved and severely punished them: *of which evil and over-valuation of these things, we are in the more danger, considering our persecutions and sufferings for them:* but that, as we believe these things are necessarily to be done, so we consider that other things are not only not to be left undone, but to be done much more. The grace of faith in Christ and the fear of God, the continual renewing of our repentance, with love, mercy, humility, and modesty, together with fervent prayer and hearty thanksgiving unto God, for His unspeakable goodness,are the things wherein specially we must serve God. . . . And if God will be known and honoured in all His creatures . . . how much more in the holy graces of His Spirit vouchsafed to His elect, notwithstanding their failings of infirmities, especially in outward ordinances!" [2] Thus did Robinson strive to inculcate a true sense of proportion in his people. He found

[1] Robinson, vol. iii. p. 356. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 109, 110.

himself unable to endorse the rigidity of the Separatist Churches in Amsterdam. Even when, in his earliest defences of Separatism, he states the case most stiffly and uncompromisingly, he does not go the lengths of Ainsworth. Both alike rejected the Puritan ministers' plea that their ministry was valid because it issued in conversion and spiritual blessing. But it is Ainsworth who suggests that this may be a device of the devil to decoy souls into the Church of England. Even when he felt most bitterly, Robinson did not hesitate to acknowledge the good he had received in the Church of England, especially from Puritan ministers. "Whatsoever truth is in the world, it is from God, and from Him we have it, by what hand soever it be reached to us." [1] The spiritual influence of Puritan ministers proved the validity, not of their ministry, but of " such truths as are taught amongst you, which all men are bound to hold and honour as we also do." [2]

As time went on, Robinson moved further and further away from the harshness of the Barrowists. Almost from the first he practised and advocated private religious communion (*i.e.* in prayer and discussion) with the godly of whatever Church. Partly under the influence of the great Puritan divine, William Ames, and also of Henry Jacob, he defended, against the Amsterdam Church, the lawfulness of hearing ministers in the Church of England, though he was opposed to participation in a form of public worship which he held to be evil. He remonstrated with the Church in Amsterdam for disciplining a member who had listened to a

[1] Robinson, vol. ii. p. 8. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 407.

minister in the Church of England when in London. Moreover, he defended against Helwisse and Murton the validity of the baptism received in the Church of England, so unwilling was he to reject anything which he felt he could rightly retain.

Yet, with all this, he was never disloyal to these earlier and more extreme Separatists. It would have been easy to have repudiated them, and to have insisted on the differences between them, so as to have conciliated public opinion, especially Puritan opinion, towards themselves. This Robinson declined to do. Though much troubled by Smyth's instability, Robinson never lost his respect for him. With the Church under Johnson and Ainsworth he continued in communion, exerting as far as he could a moderating influence in their dissensions. Ainsworth he certainly appreciated. Ainsworth's paraphrase of the Psalms was used in public worship in Leyden. Without doubt Robinson would have endorsed, if he did not inspire, Bradford's charitable verdict on the Ancient Separatist Church of Amsterdam. "They had few friends to comfort them, nor any arm of flesh to support them: and if in some things they were too rigid, they are rather to be pitied, considering their times and sufferings, than to be blasted with reproach to posterity."

What, then, was the attitude of the Leyden Church toward the Dutch Reformed Church and other Calvinist Churches? We know from Dr. Usher that when they went to Leyden they would have to contend with the Dutch Reformed Church, which was blind to the Light in the Word of God.

The method of contention is described by Robinson in the following words: "Touching the Reformed Churches, what more shall I say? We account them the true Churches of Jesus Christ, and both profess and practise communion with them in the holy things of God, what in us lieth: their sermons such of ours frequent, as understand the Dutch tongue: the sacraments we do administer unto their known members, if by occasion any of them be present with us: their distractions and other evils we do seriously bewail, and do desire from the Lord their holy and firm peace." [1] Contention took the form of amicable intercommunion. Robinson followed with intense interest and close attention the Arminian controversy. It confirmed him in a moderate Calvinism. He entered the lists in discussion with Episcopius, one of the Divinity Professors at Leyden University, who defended the Arminian position. Robinson is said to have been invited by the Dutch Calvinist leaders to undertake this task. In any case, his relations with the University and with the Dutch Reformed Church were most cordial.

John Cotton described Robinson's general attitude in this way: "It is true Mr. Robinson did not acknowledge a National Church governed by the Episcopacy to be a Church of Divine Institution. But though he acknowledged the style and privileges of a Church in the New Testament to belong to a particular congregation of visible saints: yet such National Churches, French or Dutch, as were governed by Presbyters, and

[1] Robinson, vol. iii. p. 11.

separate from the world at the Lord's Table, he did not disclaim communion with them. I have been given to understand that when a reverend and godly Scottish minister came that way [it seemeth to have been Mr. John Tarbes] he offered him communion at the Lord's Table, though the other, for fear of offence at the Scottish Churches at home, excused himself." [1] Robinson clearly did not believe in strict communion. Presbyterian Churches Robinson and his Church freely and gladly acknowledged. With individual Puritans he sought and maintained close friendship. In religious communion with Puritans he encouraged his people to go as far as they could. Indeed Robert Baillie, in his *Dissuasive from Separatism*, confessed that John Robinson had come half-way to the Puritan position and had built "a fair bridge, at least a fair arch of a bridge for union." Robinson himself believed that he occupied ground which Puritans themselves would willingly occupy. "Would the King but give toleration, and withhold from bodily violence against their persons and estates, I doubt not but we should have many thousands in the land concurring with us for substance of practice, as they do now in opinion." [2] His forecast was justified in large measure in the history of New England. In any case, Robinson aimed at a fusion of Puritan and Separatist forces.

Towards the Church of England he ceased to entertain bitter feelings, though condemning its defects to the last. As we have already made clear, repudiation of the Church of England was

[1] Cotton, p. 8. [2] Robinson, vol. iii. p. 150.

not insisted on as a test of membership in Leyden. John Paget, Puritan minister in Amsterdam, confirms this. He contrasts the narrowness of Ainsworth with the catholicity of Robinson. "Mr. Robinson and his people receive the members of the Church of England into their congregation, and this without any renunciation of the Church of England, without any repentance for their idolatries committed in the Church of England." At the close of his tract on the lawfulness of hearing ministers of the Church of England, Robinson expressed his mature judgment in these words: "To conclude: for myself thus I believe with my heart before God and profess with my tongue . . . that I have one and the same faith, hope, spirit, baptism, and Lord which I had in the Church of England, and none other: that I esteem so many in that Church, of what state or order soever, as are truly partakers of that faith, as I account many thousands to be, for my Christian brethren, and myself a fellow-member with them of that one mystical body of Christ scattered far and wide throughout the world: that I have always, in spirit and affection, all Christian fellowship and communion with them, and am most ready, in all outward actions and exercises of religion, lawful and lawfully done, to express the same: and withal that I am persuaded, the hearing of the Word of God there preached, in the manner and upon the grounds formerly mentioned, is both lawful, and upon occasion necessary, for me and all true Christians, withdrawing from that hierarchical order of Church government and ministry

and appurtenances thereof: and uniting in the order and ordinances instituted by Christ, the only King and Lord of His Church, and by all His disciples to be observed: and lastly, that I cannot communicate with or submit unto the said Church-order and ordinances there established, either in state or act, without being condemned of my own heart, and therein provoking God, who is greater than my heart, to condemn me much more. And for my failings, which may easily be too many, one way or other, of ignorance therein, and so for all my other sins, I most humbly crave pardon, first and most, at the hands of God: and so of all men, whom therein I offend or have offended any manner of way: even as they desire and look that God should pardon their offences." [1]

If lawfulness of separation be measured by the reluctance with which it is made, and the temperateness with which it is upheld, John Robinson was clear of the sin of schism. He could honestly claim that his heart was "truly disposed to union with all Christians so far as possibly he could see it lawful," and that he was secure from "being attached for a schismatical person and so found in the court of heaven." [2]

Naturally in Leyden their whole life centred on their Church. They purchased in the Klooksteeg, near the Pieterskerk, a large house, in the upper story of which their pastor lived, while the big room on the ground-floor served as an assembly-room. Here on the Sundays they met for worship. In the morning they took the sacrament together,

[1] Robinson, vol. iii. pp. 377, 378. [2] *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 72.

preceded as a rule by extemporary prayer, reading and exposition of Scripture, the singing of Psalms, and the sermon by the pastor. In the afternoon some passage of Scripture would be opened, or some question propounded, on which the pastor and the elder might speak, and afterwards lay-members of the Church who had any claim to the gift of prophecy. Six or seven might take part in this way in one session. The Church laid great stress on the ordinance of lay-preaching. It seemed to them to be the means of edification. Freedom in preaching and freedom in prayer were essential factors in awaking and sustaining the spiritual life. At the close of the afternoon's exercises the deacon would " put the congregation in mind of their duty of contribution." [1]

The meetings for worship were often followed by meetings to transact Church affairs and enforce Church discipline. Responsibility lay with the whole congregation, and even the pastor was subject to the censure and admonition of the Church. Robinson welcomed this submission of the minister to the Church as a salutary discipline. " For mine own part, knowing my own infirmities and that I am subject to sin, yea, and to frowardness in sin, as much as the brethren are : if by mine office I should be deprived of the remedy which they enjoy, that blessed ordinance of the Church's censures, I should think mine office

[1] The foregoing suggestions as to the meetings of the Church in Leyden are based on the assumption that the subsequent practice of the Church at Plymouth, as described in the accounts given by Winthrop and Morton (*New England's Canaan*), was substantially the same as its practice in Leyden.

accursed and myself by it, as frustrating and disappointing me of that main aid for which the servants of Christ ought to join themselves unto the Church of Christ, furnished with His power for their reformation. . . . God is my record how in the very writing of these things my soul is filled with spiritual joy that I am under this easy yoke of Christ, the censures of the Church whereof I am : and how much I am comforted in this very consideration against my vile and corrupt nature, which, notwithstanding, I am persuaded the Lord will never so far suffer to rebel as that it shall not be tamed and subdued by this strong hand of God without which it might every day and hour so hazard my salvation." [1] Part of the secret of Robinson's leadership lies here. His readiness to put himself alongside his fellow-members, his unwillingness to exalt his office unduly, gave him great moral authority. His advice and judgment had the more weight as he himself so highly honoured the judgment and advice of his fellow-members. This was the school in which the congregation learned the elements of true democracy—democracy with self-restraint and a sense of responsibility in it. Here they were educated in devotion to the community. Bradford says of Robinson : " None offended him more than those who kept apart from the rest and neglected the common good, or those who were rigid in matters of outward order, and would inveigh against the evils of others, and yet were remiss themselves and not too careful to maintain virtuous con-

[1] Robinson, vol. ii. p. 227.

versation." [1] There was no encouragement given to petty fault-finding. Humility, self-examination, and a genuine concern for the welfare of the whole body were essential qualifications for these Christian democrats.

It is to be noted that full participation was reserved for men. Women were to be silent in the Church. The unhappy passage in 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35 effectually disposed of women's rights. They might neither preach nor take part in the business of the Church.

On the other hand, there was no very strict limitation of the things to be submitted to the consideration of the Church. They did not simply discuss moral problems, they endeavoured to solve practical difficulties. Their pastor's wisdom was available in their economic troubles, and it was a great asset. To quote Bradford again : " His love was great towards them, and his care was always bent to their best good both for soul and body : for besides his singular ability in divine things (wherein he excelled) he was also very able in directing their civil affairs and foreseeing dangers and troubles: so he was very helpful to their material well-being and was in every way a common father to them." [2] When differences and disputes arose among Church-members, they were settled by the Church, without requiring any reference to Dutch magistrates. They put in practice the directions which St. Paul gave to the Corinthians in the sixth chapter of his first letter. Their success in this regard was affirmed by the testimony of the public

[1] Bradford, p. 18. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 18.

authorities : " About the time of their departure [in 1620], or a little before, the magistrates of the city gave this commendable testimony of them in the public place of justice, in reproof of the Walloons who were of the French Church there. ' These English,' said they, ' have lived among us these twelve years, and yet we never had any suit or accusation against any of them ; but your strifes and quarrels are continual.' " When the pilgrims sought permission from the Leyden authorities to migrate there in February 1609, the permission was granted without enthusiasm. These English Separatists were thought to be troublesome folk. But the pilgrims lived all that down and established their reputation for honesty, integrity, and quiet, peaceable behaviour.

There is no doubt that the pilgrims under John Robinson succeeded in showing that Separatism did not necessarily issue in dissension or in fostering a self-satisfied, narrow-minded, cantankerous spirit. On the contrary, they proved that the practice of Christian democracy might be, and should be, the means of deepening, strengthening, and sweetening character. This was and remains their supreme service to the cause they advocated. They built up a fine type of community life on the basis of their adherence to the spirit and practice of the New Testament Churches. When we remember how new democracy was then, and how imperfect it is now, it is difficult to over-estimate the significance of their achievement.

Their success is manifested by the spirit of unity and good-will which pervaded the Church, and by

the attractive power which the Church possessed. Bradford is naturally enthusiastic in his tribute to the Leyden Church, but his evidence cannot be impeached. If there had not been this deep community-spirit, the third venture, the voyage of the *Mayflower*, must have ended in failure. For all their enthusiasm, Bradford's words are still the words of soberness and truth. He refers to the spirit of the Church both in his *History* and in his *Dialogue*. In the first he says : " I know not but it may be spoken to the honour of God, and without prejudice to any, that such was the true piety, the humble zeal, and fervent love of this people, whilst they thus lived together, towards God and His ways, and the single-heartedness and sincere affection of one towards another, that they came as near the primitive pattern of the first Churches as any other Church of these later times has done." In the *Dialogue* Bradford wrote : " And that which was a crown unto them, they lived together in love and peace all their days, without any considerable differences or any disturbances that grew thereby but such as was easily healed in love : and so they continued until with mutual consent they removed into New England." [1] John Cotton confirmed this in refuting Robert Baillie's attempt to tar the Leyden Church with the brush of Amsterdam. " The Church at Leyden was in peace and free from any division when they took up thoughts of transporting themselves into America with common consent." It is hardly necessary to add the testimony of Edward Winslow, who, replying to the

[1] *Dialogue*, p. 456.

same slander, that the voyage to America was occasioned by division in the Leyden Church, wrote : " I persuade myself, never people on earth lived more lovingly together and parted more sweetly than we, the Church at Leyden, did : not rashly, in a distracted humour, but upon joint and serious deliberation, often seeking the mind of God by fasting and prayer : Whose gracious presence we not only found with us, but His blessing upon us, from that time to this instant, to the indignation of our adversaries, the admiration of strangers, and the exceeding consolation of ourselves, to see such effects of our prayers and tears before our pilgrimage here be ended." [1]

As to the growth of the Church, the number of communicants at times reached 300. The community more than doubled while at Leyden. New members came to them principally from the eastern and south-eastern counties of England. Dr. Whitley has studied closely this question of the locality from which recruits came, and his analysis for the first few years is as follows : " In December [1609] they had won an adherent from Sandwich, a baker named Roger Wilson. . . . Next year members appeared from Colchester, Yarmouth, London, Cambridge. . . . In 1611 members came to light from Beverley (? Beauvale), Norwich, Ipswich, Sandwich, Canterbury, and Newbury, showing what a cosmopolitan Church it was becoming." The nucleus from the Scrooby district was rapidly merged in a membership drawn from towns as far

[1] *Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers* (Everyman's Library), p. 359.

apart as Norwich and Sandwich. What drew people to them ? Partly their endurance of hardships while in England. For Bradford says of their "wanderings and travels both on land and sea" in 1608, "by these public afflictions their cause became famous and led many to inquire into it: and their Christian behaviour left a deep impression on the minds of many." Then, no doubt, the reputation which Robinson had made in Norwich led some from Norfolk and Suffolk to place themselves under his spiritual care. But their actual Church-fellowship drew others, who came to Leyden on business, and had no intention of joining the Pilgrim Church when they came. The most conspicuous example is Edward Winslow, of Droitwich, who came as a printer to Leyden in 1617. He was so taken by Robinson's ministry and the life of the Church that he determined to throw in his lot with them.

They had then a fair measure of success in solving their religious problem, in justifying their separation by its issue in the fruits of Christian living. The economic problem proved in some ways more difficult. Robinson was persuaded that their numbers would have grown faster if life had not been so hard for them. But, since the pressure of economic necessity helped to turn their minds towards New England, we may consider their dealing with the problem of maintaining themselves in the next chapter. The difficulty of getting a satisfactory livelihood belongs to the prelude to the third venture.

CHAPTER V

THE PRELUDE TO THE THIRD VENTURE

THE pilgrims from Scrooby, when they reached the Netherlands, soon saw "the grim and grisly face of poverty coming upon them like an armed man, with whom they must buckle and encounter, and from whom they could not fly." [1] They were for the most part husbandmen, ignorant of the language and customs of the country into which they had come. The commerce of Amsterdam offered considerable opportunities of employment to unskilled labour, but conditions of life would have been hard for them even in Amsterdam, and their removal to Leyden rather heightened than relieved their economic difficulties. "Lacking seafaring trades, which Amsterdam enjoys, it [Leyden] was not so favourable in providing means of livelihood. But, being settled here, they fell to such trades and employments as they best could, valuing peace and their spiritual comfort above any other riches whatever: and at length they came to raise a competent and comfortable living, though only by dint of hard and continual labour." [2] As Dr. Usher points out, the skilled employments were only open to Dutch citizens, and required some

[1] Bradford, p. 16. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 17.

capital and a long apprenticeship. Some thirty-three members of the Pilgrim Company became citizens of Leyden, including William Bradford and some others who went to New England.[1] But the majority of the community were not in a position to take up citizenship. Perhaps they did not wish to do so. At any rate, all of them were attached to their English citizenship. They were therefore confined to those employments which did not require great skill or capital. A man like W. Brewster apparently made a comfortable living by teaching English. He was also able, along with William Brewer, to set up a printing-press, but this was run rather for propaganda than for profit. It got him into trouble later, and he had to avoid the long arm of the English Government by the paradoxical expedient of returning to England in 1619. However, his was an exceptional case. His fellow-members followed humbler and less dangerous pursuits. A good many took to various branches of weaving. They did not attempt a communist solution of their problem, but they must have helped one another constantly, and they aimed at living close together.

Their experience must have been helpful to them in many ways. They learnt the virtue of co-operation, some of them acquired new trades, they became inured to hard and continuous toil. If they were ever tempted to snobbery, life in Holland cured them. John Robinson, in an essay on *Labour and Idleness*, says: "Proud folk despise labour and them that use it. . . . And this differ-

[1] See list in Dexter, p. 648.

ence I have observed, for the matter in hand, that whereas in plentiful countries such as our own it is half a shame to labour : in such others, wherein art and industry must supply nature's defects, as in the country where I last lived, it is a shame for a man not to work and exercise himself in some one or other vocation." [1] The members of the Leyden Church were little likely to make the mistake of bowing down to the rich. " A poor and plain person, seeing a Dives russle it in silks and glitter in gold and silver, is half ready to worship him as a petty god, many times ; but after finds by his speech and other carriage, by which a fool and wise man are differenced, that if he had so done, he had but worshipped a golden calf." [2] Robinson's flock was on its guard. Its members did not measure men's worth by possessions, and were not ashamed to dig. Dr. Byington rightly claims that the Pilgrim Fathers were socially more democratic in feeling and temper than the Puritans who followed them in Massachusetts. The latter were led by English country gentlemen, with the aristocratic style of the squire imprinted on them. The Pilgrims were men of humbler station and outlook.

Though they did not disdain hard work, they did find it a tax, prejudicial to their life and progress. One of the primary reasons for making a further move was the desire of easing their economic situation. The " hardness of life in Holland " told upon them in several ways. In the first place, it limited their growth as a community. Many joined

[1] Robinson, vol. i. p. 114. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 125.

them and then regretfully left them, finding life too hard. Some seem to have preferred even prison in England to long hours of ill-paid labour in Leyden. If their economic prospects had been brighter, the Pilgrims were sure that sympathisers would have rallied round them more readily. In the second place, the original exiles, though they succeeded in earning a competence, found they were exhausting their strength and ageing prematurely. But, worse than this, they could see no tolerable future for their children. The most dutiful of their sons and daughters took the yoke of poverty in their youth, but were bowed down under it, "the vigour of nature being consumed in the very bud as it were." The wilder spirits, especially among the young men, revolted against the dullness and hardships to which they were subjected. They became soldiers or went to sea. The Pilgrims likewise distrusted the influence of Dutch customs and city-life on their young people. Leyden was not a very religious city. Its standard of Sabbath observance was not high. The Pilgrims had embraced the strict ideas of Sabbath-keeping set forth by Nicholas Bound in 1594. They had hoped their presence in Leyden would strengthen the hands of those in the Reformed Church who desired to persuade the magistrates to enforce Sabbath observance. But things remained as they were, and dislike of the Continental Sunday was among the minor reasons which stimulated the desire to seek a new abode. More generally, the younger generation was likely to be drawn into the main stream of Dutch life, and the Pilgrims

feared this, partly because they were uneasy about some points in Dutch manners and morals, and partly because they did not wish to lose their identity as Englishmen. They perceived that they could not indefinitely continue as a group of English exiles in Holland. They must either find a country where they could live together as Englishmen, or they must become citizens in the land of their exile. In spite of all temptations, and they were many, they resolved to remain English, if possible.

This fear of absorption by the Dutch is well brought out in Dr. Usher's narrative, but he gives a special turn to it which seems more doubtful. He says: "Insensibly the influence of the Dutch and English Churches near them was modifying the ideas of the rank and file, and stimulated a searching and reading, a discussing and propounding, which not only led 'unstable wills and feeble intelligencies' into dangerous waters, but tended to keep constantly alive active controversy as to the validity of their own fundamental conclusions."[1] I confess I cannot find a trace of this, either in Bradford, or Morton, or Winslow, or John Robinson. There is no evidence at all that they felt their church life was being disintegrated by the influence alleged. The whole stress in Bradford is placed on the economic difficulty, which prevented the coming of new adherents and undermined the loyalty of their children.

Another important factor in their decision was the darkening of the political horizon. In 1618 the Thirty Years' War began. Their stay in Ley-

[1] Usher, p. 44.

den coincided with the twelve years' truce between Spain and the United Netherlands. The renewal of war with Spain was close at hand. Would the Spaniard overrun the country and repeat the horrors of the siege of Leyden? The outlook for Protestantism was dark. The Reformation might lose the Old World altogether, and already the Jesuits, protected by Spain and France, were seeking to capture the New World of America. Was it not time that Protestants too bestirred themselves and assured their footing across the Atlantic? When the Pilgrims turned their thoughts to America they had a positive idea of serving both their country and the cause of Protestantism. They hoped to advance at once the power of King James and the Kingdom of God. Morton gives these considerations as the two last and perhaps weightiest of the reasons which determined them. "Fourthly, their posterity would in few generations become Dutch and so lose their interest in the English nation: they being desirous rather to enlarge His Majesty's dominions and to live under their natural Prince. Lastly (and which was not the least) a great hope and inward zeal they had of laying some good foundation, or at least to make some way thereunto, for the propagating and advancement of the Gospel of the Kingdom of Christ in those remote parts of the world, yea, although they should be but as stepping-stones unto others for the performance of so great a work." [1]

The Leyden Church was not the first group of Separatists to entertain the idea of migration to

[1] Everyman ed., p. 10.

English Colonies. Some Brownists had petitioned Elizabeth to be allowed to settle "in the Province of Canada, where we may not only worship God as we are in conscience persuaded by His Word, but also do unto Her Majesty and our country great good service, and in time also greatly annoy that bloody and persecuting Spaniard about the Bay of Mexico." [1] In 1597 some Separatists had taken part in a prospecting voyage to an island near Newfoundland; but it led to nothing. When the matter was first agitated in Leyden in 1617, the cause of colonisation was not advancing very rapidly. Things were more or less at a standstill in Virginia, and the Virginia Company of London was getting into difficulties. Captain John Smith had surveyed the coast of New England in 1614, and had induced Prince Charles to rename the places on his map. But his vigorous eloquence could not persuade men to take up the project of planting New England. He appealed to every kind of motive. He denounced covetousness. "Rich men for the most part are grown to that dotage through their pride in their wealth as though there were no accident could end it or their life." He reminded them of the miserable ruin of Constantinople, which he attributed to its security in its wealth. No empire is safe that is not expanding. At the same time he appealed to men's cupidity, "for I am not so simple to think that ever any other motive than wealth will ever erect there a commonwealth or draw company from their ease and humours at home to stay in

[1] Waddington, *Congregational History*, 1567–1700, p. 113.

New England to effect my purposes." [1] He gave glowing descriptions of the natural resources of the country, of the delights awaiting the planters, of the advantages open to the labourer. Nor did he despise the missionary motive. "Religion above all things should move us, especially the clergy, if we are religious, to show our faith by our works, in converting those poor savages to the knowledge of God, seeing what pains the Spaniards take to bring them to their adultered faith." But his appeal fell on deaf ears. This was largely due to the very limited success of earlier enterprises. These had tended to fail precisely because the primary motive was wealth. Men went out to find gold and to get rich quickly. There was also a tendency to suppose that men who had done no good in England would be sure to succeed in the colonies—a fallacy that has proved fatal to much colonial enterprise. Such expeditions as were fitted out at this time went to Virginia rather than New England. The Leyden Church followed the fashion and made their plans for Virginia, entering into negotiations with the Virginia Company.

Because of the difficulties of finding suitable and trustworthy colonists, there was now some inclination on the part of the authorities to encourage Separatists to settle in the new continent. In 1618 Thomas Drax, Vicar of Dovercourt, threw out the idea that the Separatists who would not return to the Church should go to Virginia and convert the infidels.[2] In the same year some mem-

[1] *John Smith's Travels*, vol. ii. p. 33.

[2] *The Works of John Smyth*, Intro., p. xxiii.

bers of the Amsterdam Church made an unsuccessful expedition to Virginia under the leadership of Blackwell. Drax seems to have given expression to a policy which had already commended itself to some statesmen, for when the first tentative enquiries on behalf of the Leyden Church were made at Court in 1617, King James I was not unsympathetic to the proposal. He said, "it was a good and honest motion," and he asked, "What profits might arise in the part we intended?" It was answered, "Fishing." To which he replied with his ordinary asseveration, "So God have my soul, 'tis an honest trade! It was the Apostles' own calling." With the King in such a pleasant mood, John Carver and Robert Cushman, who were negotiating with and through the Virginia Company in London on behalf of the Leyden Church, hoped to secure a charter under the royal seal, giving explicit toleration. Robinson drew up seven articles, intended to make a favourable impression on the King, acknowledging the civil authority of bishops, as derived from the crown, and also recognising that synods, classes, etc., had no legal authority apart from the crown. This essay in diplomacy proved unsuccessful, and perhaps it was well for the petitioners that it did so. The King refused to move further in the matter without consulting the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the patrons of the Leyden Church among the members of the Virginia Company thought it unwise to press things further. This rather damped the enthusiasm of the Church in Leyden. They were distinctly a cautious people, and they had looked for real

guarantees for liberty. But Sir Edwin Sandys and other members of the governing body of the Virginia Company encouraged them to go forward. The King's initial approbation was thought to be sufficient, and it was pointed out that if there were any intention of tampering with toleration when they were settled in Virginia, the royal seal would not protect them. Charters are as easily revoked as granted, and distance would prove a more solid defence than the King's word.

So throughout 1618 and 1619 negotiations with the Virginia Company continued. The Church had no difficulty in convincing the Company that they were serious and desirable colonists. Brewster and Robinson put the principal points in a letter in December 1617, which is worth quoting. They urge the following inducements upon the attention of the Company: "First, we verily believe and trust the Lord is with us, unto Whom and Whose service we have given ourselves in many trials, and that He will graciously prosper our endeavours according to the simplicity of our hearts therein. Secondly, we are well weaned from the delicate milk of our mother-country and inured to the difficulties of a strange and hard land, which yet in a great part we have by patience overcome. Thirdly, the people are, for the body of them, industrious and frugal, we think we may safely say, as any company of people in the world. Fourthly, we are knit together as a body in a most strict and sacred bond and covenant of the Lord, of the violation whereof we make great conscience,

and by virtue whereof we do hold ourselves straitly tied to all care of each other's good and of the whole by every one and so mutually. Fifth. Lastly it is not with us as with other men, whom small things can discourage or small discontentments cause to wish themselves at home again. We know our entertainment in England and in Holland: we shall much prejudice both our arts and means by removal: who if we should be driven to return we should not hope to recover our present helps and comforts, neither indeed look ever, for ourselves, to attain unto the like in any other place during our lives, which are now drawing towards their periods." [1] These qualities of character and experience they were prepared to contribute to the venture, and this contribution was essential. "The splendid material resources of America slumbered until a capital stock of 'moral wealth,' which is the heir of the ages, arrived from Europe." [2] The first substantial stock of this indispensable moral wealth came with the Pilgrim Fathers.

The Company recognised the solid worth of their prospective colonists. They said the thing was of God, and eventually granted a patent in February 1619. Some members made offers of capital, one in particular offering £300 free of interest for three years. Then unfortunately the Company split over the election of a chairman, and in consequence failed to put up the necessary funds. So in May 1619 Cushman had to report that they found themselves with the King's approbation but no charter,

[1] Bradford, pp. 32, 33.
[2] Marshall, *Industry and Trade*, p. 143.

and with a grant of land from the Virginia Company but no capital.

It was at this juncture that the Dutch Government made overtures to them. Would they be willing to settle in New Holland ? Once more they were tempted to abandon their English citizenship. But a certain Thomas Weston, merchant, assured them that he could find a number of friends to adventure with him, and put up the requisite capital. So they declined the Dutch offer and entered into negotiations with Weston and his friends. It was about this time, midsummer 1619, that in Leyden they began to make active preparations for departure. Only those who could get ready quickly were to go. The larger number were to stay behind in Leyden, John Robinson remaining with them as pastor. William Brewster was to go with the smaller company of pioneers. It was agreed they should form two distinct Churches. " Those that went should be an absolute Church of themselves, as well as those that stayed." But it was also agreed that those who came over later should be accepted as members of the Church overseas without further question. But their forwardness in preparation put them in difficulties. They were ready to go in the summer of 1619, but they were destined not to start until the following year. " Those who had put off their estates and laid out their moneys were brought into a great strait." It was not so easy to come to an agreement with Weston and his friends after all. Choice of destination proved a difficulty. Some were for Guiana, and some for Virginia. Yet others favoured New

England, which had just been granted to a new Company and withdrawn from the Virginian patent. "Unto which Mr. Weston and the chief of them began to incline it was best for them to go, as for other reasons, so chiefly for the hope of present profit to be made by the fishing that was found in that country." [1] However, the general trend of opinion favoured Virginia still, and it was by accident rather than design that they ultimately settled in New England.

As serious a difficulty arose in connection with the terms of association. Thomas Weston and John Robinson had agreed on these and drawn them up in writing after discussion in Leyden. But when Weston presented these articles to those whom he expected to act with him, he found that they were anxious to have them strengthened in favour of the adventurers, as those who provided capital were called, and to the disadvantage of the planters, as those who risked their lives and persons were called. Weston therefore told Cushman that he could not raise the desired capital unless the planters consented to changes in the terms of association. Cushman, fearing the whole venture would fail again, hurriedly consented without consulting his friends in Leyden. The form in which the agreement was finally presented to the planters was as follows:

"An°: 1620. July 1.

"1. The adventurers and planters do agree, that every person that goeth being aged 16 years and

[1] Bradford, p. 44.

upward, be rated at £10, and ten pounds to be accounted a single share.

" 2. That he that goeth in person, and furnisheth himself out with £10, either in money or other provisions, be accounted as having £20 in stock, and in the division shall receive a double share.

" 3. The persons transported and the adventurers shall continue their joint stock and partnership together, the space of 7 years (except some unexpected impediment do cause the whole company to agree otherwise), during which time, all profits and benefits that are got by trade, traffic, trucking, working, fishing, or any other means of any person or persons, remain still in the common stock until the division.

" 4. That at their coming there, they chose out such a number of fit persons, as may furnish their ships and boats for fishing upon the sea ; employing the rest in their several faculties upon the land ; as building houses, tilling, and planting the ground, and making such commodities as shall be most useful for the colony.

" 5. That at the end of the 7 years, the capital and profits, viz. the houses, lands, goods and chattels, be equally divided betwixt the adventurers and planters ; which done, every man shall be free from other of them of any debt or detriment concerning this adventure.

" 6. Whosoever cometh to the colony hereafter, or putteth any into the stock, shall at the end of the 7 years be allowed proportionably to the time of his so doing.

" 7. He that shall carry his wife and children,

or servants, shall be allowed for every person now aged 16 and upward, a single share in the division, or if he provide them necessaries, a double share, or if they be between 10 year old and 16, then 2 of them to be reckoned for a person, both in transportation and division.

" 8. That such children as now go, and are under the age of ten years, have no other share in the division but 50 acres of unmanured land.

" 9. That such persons as die before the 7 years be expired, their executors to have their part or share at the division, proportionably to the time of their life in the colony.

" 10. That all such persons as are of this colony are to have their meat, drink, apparel, and all provisions out of the common stock and goods of the said colony."

This differed from the form of agreement drawn up by Weston and Robinson in two important particulars. In the original agreement the planters were to keep their houses and improved land, especially gardens and home-lots. They were also to have two days each week in which to labour for themselves, and not for the common profit of all who shared in the enterprise. The changes insisted on the whole of their property and the whole of their labour-time being thrown into the common stock. The inevitable effect would be to discourage effort in building and gardening, since a man would have to ransom his dwelling-house and garden at the end of seven years. John Robinson, William Brewster, and the rest of the Pilgrims were naturally indignant. They felt that Cushman had been

precipitate, Weston vacillating, if not dishonest, while the actual changes proposed seemed to them likely to prejudice the whole enterprise. They refused to sign the new conditions, and the question was still at issue when the time came for them to start.

Their departure from Holland and voyage across the Atlantic form the subject of the next chapter, but, before entering upon this part of the subject, it may be well to dwell for a moment or two on the significance of their motives. The economic interpretation of history is fashionable just now, and we have recognised the part played by economic factors in the momentous decision to cross the Atlantic. Many will be glad to discover that economic reasons bulked so large, and will promptly discount the religious element. But the term "economic" is elastic and ambiguous. It covers no doubt a multitude of sins, and also a modicum of virtue. When a particular decision is said to be based on economic reasons, we usually mean that it is prompted by love of gain or the shrewd pursuit of self-interest. The motives of the adventurers were largely economic in this sense. To apply the term with this implication to the planters would be misleading. Men who are living for high ends cannot normally ignore the duty of providing for their physical needs. The Pilgrim Fathers certainly went to America to escape the economic disadvantages under which they laboured in Holland. But their economic problem and the spirit in which they solved it were determined by their religious faith and the experience into which

it had brought them. There is no such thing as an isolated, self-determined economic life. The economic life of these men was bound up with their religion. Captain Smith was mistaken in thinking that wealth was the only motive that would ever erect a commonwealth in New England. If wealth had been the only motive of the Pilgrim Fathers they would probably never have erected the commonwealth which they actually did erect. Our use of the term "economic" is too facile, and does less than justice to the complex life of man. This third venture of the Pilgrims sustains the thesis that "some touch of idealism, religious, patriotic, or artistic, can generally be detected at the root of any great outburst of practical energy." In this instance the idealism was patriotic and religious.

CHAPTER VI

THE THIRD VENTURE: HOW THEY SET OUT

PREPARATIONS for the voyage were made partly in England and partly in Holland. The numbers from Leyden who had finally decided to go were not large. The majority of the Church had resolved to remain in Leyden, and John Robinson was to stay with them. Many had hesitated about the enterprise from the beginning. They feared the hardships of the voyage itself. They thought they might be worse off in America than in Holland. The change of climate and of diet might prove disastrous. They were apprehensive of the perils of drinking water, for they believed in beer so firmly as almost to satisfy Mr. Chesterton's standards of orthodoxy. Presumably their prejudice against the much drinking of water had its basis in the difficulty of getting pure water at the time. That these perils from change of air and diet really impressed them is clear from an entry in Bradford's *History* under the year 1643, when he records his wonder that so many lived to a good old age: "It must needs be more than ordinary and above natural reasons that so it should be: for it is found in experience that change of air, famine, or unwholesome food,

much drinking of water, sorrows, troubles, etc., are all of them enemies to health. . . ." [1]

Beyond these expectations of hardship, many were deterred by tales of the savagery of the Indians. They were unwilling to run the risk of being scalped and tortured. Consequently at the first suggestion of migrating to America many drew back. Then the disastrous expedition of Francis Blackwell discouraged very many. He had lost 130 out of 180 persons on the voyage, through trying to take more than his ship would really hold. Dr. Usher suggests that Blackwell's experience in 1618 convinced the Leyden Church that the necessary outlay per head would be greater than they had anticipated. They would have to provide more capital. This resulted in a diminution of the number who went. The long-drawn-out negotiations with the Virginia Company also damped the ardour of some. They did secure their patent in 1619, but this was of little use, as the Virginia Company was unable to provide the shipping that was needed. However, on the strength of Mr. Weston's offer, several members of the Church made ready to go. They sold their property, and purchased and fitted out, in the spring of 1620, a ship of sixty tons burden, called the *Speedwell*, " which was intended as to serve to help to transport them, so to stay in the country and attend upon fishing and such other affairs as might be for the good and benefit of the colony when they came there." [2]

When, therefore, in June the proposal to revise

[1] Bradford, p. 415. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 58.

the terms of association was made known in Leyden, there was a group of some forty or fifty so deeply committed to the enterprise that they could not withdraw. They were naturally indignant, as they thought the adventurers were taking advantage of their situation to extort unfair terms from them. Meanwhile the preparations in England hung fire. There the agents of the planters, John Carver and Robert Cushman, were responsible along with the adventurers for hiring the larger ship and for purchasing provisions for a year, and the general outfit of the expedition. Associated in these transactions with Carver and Cushman was one Mr. Martin. "He came from Billiricke [Bellericay], in Essex, from which part came sundry others to go with them [the Leyden Company], as also from London and other places, and therefore it was thought meet and convenient for them in Holland that these strangers that were to go with them should appoint one of them to be joined with them, not so much for any great need of this help, as to avoid all suspicion and jealousy of any partiality." Unfortunately Martin and Cushman did not work well together. They bought stores independently of one another, and it is doubtful whether the original capital was laid out to the best advantage. But by far the most important part of the preparations in England was the procuring of the ship to take them over. By the beginning of June they were still without a ship, and the adventurers were unwilling to proceed until their conditions of association were signed. However Robert Cushman succeeded in persuading Thomas Weston to act.

According to Cushman both he and Weston were inclined to withdraw from the whole business when the men in Leyden demurred to the new terms proposed by the adventurers. But, "considering how far we were plunged into matters, and how it stood both on our credits and undoing, at the last Mr. Weston gathered up himself a little more and told me [Cushman] he would not yet leave it. And so advising together we resolved to hire a ship, and have took a liking of one till Monday [June 12, 1620, Old Style], about 60 last, for a greater we cannot get, except it be too great: but a fine ship it is." This ship was not apparently the *Mayflower*, as 60 last is equivalent to only 120 tons. It would seem that on the Monday, when they had to close the transaction, they were offered the *Mayflower*, a still finer ship of 180 tons. She was a ship that had been employed in whaling before 1620, and her captain, Christopher Jones, was acquainted with the North American coast. Christopher Jones was part-owner of the vessel, and proved a true friend of the Pilgrims. The *Mayflower* was hired in London, and here she was to take in some passengers and such stores as Cushman had collected there. Other passengers and the bulk of the stores were to be shipped at Southampton, where the *Speedwell* with the Leyden contingent was to meet the *Mayflower*. In spite of the still unresolved difference between themselves and the adventurers, the planters proceeded to carry out this plan of action.

For the description of the departure from Holland we cannot do better than follow Bradford's narra-

tive: "So being ready to depart, they had a day of solemn humiliation, their pastor taking his text from Ezra viii. 21: 'And there at the river, by Ahava, I proclaimed a fast, that we might humble ourselves before our God, and seek of Him a right way for us, and for our children, and for all our substance.' Upon which he spent a good part of the day very profitably, and suitable to their present occasion. The rest of the time was spent in pouring out prayers to the Lord with great fervency, mixed with abundance of tears. And the time being come that they must depart, they were accompanied with most of their brethren out of the city, unto a town sundry miles off called Delfes-Haven, where the ship lay ready to receive them. So they left the goodly and pleasant city, which had been their resting-place near twelve years; but they knew they were pilgrims,[1] and looked not much on those things, but lift up their eyes to the heavens, their dearest country, and quieted their spirits. When they came to the place they found the ship and all things ready; and such of their friends as could not come with them followed after them, and sundry also came from Amsterdam to see them shipped and to take leave of them. That night was spent with little sleep by the most, but with friendly entertainment and Christian discourse and other real expressions of true Christian love. The next day, the wind being fair, they went aboard, and their friends with them, where truly doleful was the sight of that

[1] It is from this time that it is right to call them Pilgrim Fathers.

sad and mournful parting: to see what sighs and sobs and prayers did sound amongst them, what tears did gush from every eye, and pithy speeches pierced each heart; that sundry of the Dutch strangers that stood on the quay as spectators could not refrain from tears. Yet comfortable and sweet it was to see such lively and true expressions of dear and unfeigned love. But the tide (which stays for no man) calling them away that were thus loath to depart, their reverend pastor falling down on his knees (and they all with him), with watery cheeks commended them with most fervent prayers to the Lord and His blessing. And then with mutual embraces and many tears, they took their leaves one of another; which proved to be the last leave to many of them." [1]

Winslow, in his shorter narrative, supplements Bradford's story in some particulars. It would seem that the solemn day of humiliation and fasting ended in a feast and the singing of Psalms. "They that stayed at Leyden feasted us that were to go at our Pastor's house, it being large: where we refreshed ourselves after our tears with singing of Psalms, making joyful melody in our hearts as well as with the voice, there being many in the congregation very expert in music: and indeed it was the sweetest melody that ever mine ears heard." [2] Winslow's account of the sailing from Delfshaven is also worth recalling, as it gives some additional touches. "And after prayer, performed by our pastor, where a flood of tears was poured out, they accompanied us to the ship; but were

[1] Bradford, p. 59 f. [2] Arber, p. 329.

not able to speak one to another for the abundance of sorrow to part. But we only going aboard, the ship lying to the quay and ready to set sail: the wind being fair we gave them a volley of small shot and of three pieces of ordinance: and so, lifting up our hands to each other and our hearts for each other to the Lord our God, we departed and found His presence with us in the midst of our manifold straits that He carried us through." [1]

An even more valuable contribution from Winslow is to be found in his recollection of John Robinson's farewell address. Whether it was part of the sermon on the passage from Ezra, or whether it was a separate word of exhortation slipped in among the fervent prayers, it is a significant revelation of the mind of Robinson and of the spirit of his Church. "Brethren, we are now quickly to part from one another, and whether I may ever live to see your faces on earth any more, the God of heaven only knows; but whether the Lord has appointed that or no, I charge you before God and His blessed angels that you follow me no farther than you have seen me follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

"If God reveal anything to you, by any other instrument of His, be as ready to receive it as ever you were to receive any truth by my ministry; for I am verily persuaded the Lord has more truth yet to break forth out of His Holy Word. For my part, I cannot sufficiently bewail the condition of the Reformed Churches, who are come to a period in religion, and will go at present no farther than

[1] Arber, p. 332.

the instruments of their reformation. The Lutherans cannot be drawn to go beyond what Luther saw; whatever part of His will our God has revealed to Calvin, they will rather die than embrace it; and the Calvinists, you see, stick fast where they were left by that great man of God, who yet saw not all things.

"This is a misery much to be lamented, for though they were burning and shining lights in their times, yet they penetrated not into the whole counsel of God, but, were they now living, would be as willing to embrace farther light as that which they first received. I beseech you remember, it is an article of your Church covenant, that you be ready to receive whatever truth shall be made known to you from the written Word of God. Remember that, and every other article of your sacred covenant. But I must here withal exhort you to take heed what you receive as truth—examine it, consider it, and compare it with other Scriptures of truth; for it is not possible the Christian world should come so lately out of such thick anti-Christian darkness, and that perfection of knowledge should break forth at once.

"I must also advise you to abandon, avoid, and shake off, the name of Brownists; it is a mere nickname, and a brand for the making religion and the professors of it odious to the Christian world." [1]

It has been suggested that Robinson looked for new light only in the realm of Church order and Christian practice, and not in the sphere of religious

[1] See Neal, *History of Puritans*, vol. ii. pp. 110, 111.

thought. He certainly did not anticipate that the fundamentals of Calvinism would be seriously shaken. But even if it was primarily in the organisation of the Church that he expected further developments, the saying cannot be confined to that issue only. Robinson was too deeply convinced of human fallibility to believe in theological finality. And this farewell address embodied a spirit of sober enquiry as well as a truly catholic temper. For the rejection of the term " Brownist " is not prompted merely by the wish to escape abuse, but springs from the desire to shake off sectarian narrowness. Their leader at least was consciously acting on behalf of the Christian Church as a whole.

With this impressive farewell they left Delfshaven, probably on July 21st or 22nd, and came with a favouring breeze to Southampton, where the *Mayflower*, with Brewster, Carver, and Cushman and others had been waiting for them seven days. When the whole company was met, they had to try to arrange matters with the adventurers. Weston came down from London to see them off, and to secure their signatures to the revised terms of association. Dr. Usher considers that the demand of the adventurers for the division of lands and houses at the end of seven years was natural and justifiable. " There was no collateral whatever to insure the repayment of the capital ; inasmuch as the land and buildings were to become the property of the colonists at the end of seven years, a discharge of the indebtedness depended entirely on the making of a profit in the meantime." [1]

[1] Usher, p. 62.

This contention of the adventurers clearly had force. On the other hand, the Pilgrims' objection to the conditions proposed was also reasonable. No one would put labour into his house and garden if he had no prospect of retaining it at the end of seven years. The conditions proposed by the adventurers were actually unworkable. It ought not to have been impossible to have arranged a compromise on this issue. But the adventurers were grasping, and the Pilgrims suspicious and obdurate, while the time for negotiation was very limited, as the date of sailing was already rather late in the year. The colonists declined flatly to sign the conditions, whereupon Weston, in a huff, refused to supply them any further capital. They still needed nearly £100 to pay harbour dues, and had to sell £60 of butter from among their stores in order to meet unavoidable outlay.[1] On August 3rd they wrote to the adventurers and offered to continue in partnership a further seven years if the profits realised in the first seven had not enabled them to recover their investment. Fortunately,

[1] Dr. Usher (p. 66) says of this incident: "Apprehensive of investigation by the authorities and the disclosure of their identity, they quickly sold some firkins of butter, raised the money, and thus cleared port. Their fears of ecclesiastical and temporal interference proved unfounded, for no investigations were made or questions asked at London, Southampton, Dartmouth, or Plymouth." Dr. Usher gives no authority for these fears and apprehensions of investigation and interference, and I can find none. Their desire to get away quickly is sufficiently explained by the fact that the start had already been too long delayed. Dr. Usher thus apparently insists that the Pilgrims were influenced by fear when they were not, *i.e.* at Southampton in 1620, and denies that they were afraid when they really were, *i.e.* at Scrooby in 1608.

says Bradford, this offer was refused. With the negotiations left in this unsatisfactory position they sailed from Southampton on August 5th (August 15th, New Style).

Before they actually left Southampton they had received a letter from John Robinson, which was intended to bring together the contingent from Leyden and the newcomers from London and the eastern counties. This letter evidently made a deep impression. After alluding to the pain he felt at his separation from them, he dwelt on the importance of renewing their repentance towards God, especially at such a crisis. Next he emphasised the duty of providing for peace with all men, and to that end urged them neither to give nor to take offence easily. "Neither yet is it sufficient that we keep ourselves by the grace of God from giving offences, except withal we be armed against the taking of them when they be given by others." Besides the general grounds of Christianity, which exhort to the charity that covers a multitude of offences, it was especially necessary for the Pilgrims to live in this spirit, because, first, "you are many of you strangers, as to the persons so to the infirmities one of another," and secondly, "your intended course of civil community will minister continual occasion of offence, and will be as fuel for that fire, except ye diligently quench it with brotherly forbearance." Once again Robinson enforced the necessity of public spirit which he had inculcated so steadily at Leyden. With common employments they must join common affections, truly bent upon the general good. "Let every

man repress in himself and the whole body in each person, as so many rebels against the common good, all private respect of men's selves, not sorting with the general conveniency." Finally, he warned them to pay due honour to their leaders and magistrates. He foresaw that in a small company of persons very much on the same social level, and many of them unused to democratic government, elected governors might fail to command respect, just because they were elected. This closing counsel is full of insight, and contains the essential wisdom which can alone make democracy safe for the world. It is not necessary therefore to apologise for quoting it in full.

"Lastly, whereas you are become a body politic, using amongst yourselves civil government, and are not furnished with any persons of special eminence above the rest, to be chosen by you into office of government, let your wisdom and godliness appear, not only in choosing such persons as do entirely love and will promote the common good, but also in yielding unto them all due honour and obedience in their lawful administrations; not beholding in them the ordinariness of their persons, but God's ordinance for your good, not being like the foolish multitude who more honour the gay coat, than either the virtuous mind of the man, or glorious ordinance of the Lord. But you know better things, and that the image of the Lord's power and authority which the magistrate beareth, is honourable, in how mean persons soever. And this duty you both may the more willingly, and ought the more conscionably to perform, because you are at least

for the present to have only them for your ordinary governors, which your selves shall make choice of for that work." [1]

With this assurance of the interest and prayers of those who continued at Leyden, they set out on August 5th. But they did not proceed far without mishap. Mr. Reynolds, the master of the *Speedwell*, "found his ship so leak as he durst not put further to sea till she was mended." They put back into Dartmouth, where the *Speedwell* was overhauled. This delayed them nearly a fortnight, and they appear to have put to sea again about August 23rd. Again the *Speedwell* got into difficulties. About 100 leagues from Land's End she sprung a leak, and was in danger of sinking. Back they went once more, and this time put in at Plymouth. On this further examination they concluded that the *Speedwell* was overmasted and would never get across unless she was refitted throughout. According to Bradford's narrative, Reynolds, the captain, and the sailors mishandled the vessel, in order to get out of their contract to spend a year with the colonists in fishing and trading. The *Speedwell* was to have stayed over the other side. But the initial mistake must have been with those colonists who were responsible for the purchase and fitting out of the *Speedwell in* Holland. These further delays were very discouraging. It was clear they could wait no longer for the *Speedwell*. The *Mayflower* must cross unaccompanied, and the number of the colonists must be reduced to suit the capacity of the larger

[1] Bradford, pp. 66, 67.

ship. Their numbers were reduced from 120 to 100. Among others Robert Cushman withdrew, very much disheartened about the whole enterprise. At the first set-back, when they returned to Dartmouth, he wrote to a friend: "If ever we make a plantation, God works a miracle; especially considering how scant we shall be of victuals and most of all ununited among ourselves and devoid of good tutors and regiment." The "regiment" in the *Speedwell* was then in the hands of his *bête noire*, Mr. Martin. If Cushman felt so doubtful at Dartmouth it is not surprising that he withdrew at Plymouth. Bradford summarises the reasons which led some to draw back, in the following paragraph: "Those that went back were for the most part such as were willing so to do, either out of some discontent, or fear they conceived of the ill success of the voyage, seeing so many crosses befall, and the year time so far spent; but others, in regard of their own weakness, and charge of many young children, were thought least useful, and most unfit to bear the brunt of this hard adventure; unto which work of God, and judgment of their brethren, they were contented to submit."[1] Finally the *Mayflower* set sail once more on September 6th (Old Style; September 16th, New Style) from Plymouth.

Starting so late, they could not count on fair weather and a speedy voyage. They ran into storms, and did not sight land until November 9th. "After long beating at sea, they fell [in] with that land which is called Cape Cod: the which being

[1] Bradford, p. 69.

made, and certainly known to be it, they were not a little joyful." [1] They then set their course southwards, meaning to land somewhere in the neighbourhood of Hudson's River. But the winds were contrary, and eventually they turned and put into "Cape-harbour, where they rid in safety." "Upon the 11th of November we came to an anchor in the bay, and the same day as soon as we could we set ashore 15 or 16 men." "Being thus arrived in a good harbour and brought safe to land they fell upon their knees and blessed the God of heaven Who had brought them over the vast and furious ocean and delivered them from all the perils and miseries thereof, again to set their feet on the firm and stable earth, their proper element." [2]

[1] Bradford, p. 76.

[2] For list of passengers in the *Mayflower*, see Appendix III.

CHAPTER VII

BEGINNINGS

THE outlook for the passengers of the *Mayflower* was far from promising. They had arrived at the wrong time at the wrong place. They were 500 miles from the nearest English settlement. Winter would be upon them before they could get their houses built. Then the absence of the *Speedwell* was a severe handicap. They were depending on the *Speedwell* for fishing and trading. Captain John Smith represents it as an easy matter to secure adequate supplies of corn from the Indians for a colony of 300 men; but this presupposes that the colonists possess a coasting vessel which can draw supplies from a wide area. The Pilgrims were now shut up to their shallop. The abandonment of the voyage by the *Speedwell* may also account for some curious gaps in their stores. Even for fishing they were not well equipped. They wanted "fit and strong seines and other netting," [1] and also small hooks. They had to face the fortunes of the coming winter with slender resources.

The fact that they had not reached the district in which they intended to settle led to an immediate constitutional crisis, which they settled in a

[1] *Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers*, Everyman's Library, p. 288.

memorable way, before they landed. Their original destination had been the neighbourhood of Hudson's River, in the North Virginia Company's area. For this they had a patent made out to John Wincob, who was to have come with them, but did not. This patent, acquired after two years' negotiations, was now useless. They had touched shore in country which in the very month of their arrival was being assigned as New England to a new Company. King James had signed this charter on November 3rd. The Pilgrims were therefore without legal rights in the country they had reached. Some of the men who had joined from England announced their intention of doing as they pleased when once they were ashore, "for none had power to command them, the patent they had being for Virginia and not for New England, which belonged to another government, with which the Virginia Company had nothing to do." [1] In view of these discontented and mutinous speeches, and to take the place of the patent they lacked, the leaders drew up a compact which was to be the foundation of their government. The terms of it are as follows: "In the name of God, Amen. We whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread sovereign Lord, King James, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland King, Defender of the Faith, etc., having undertaken, for the glory of God and advancement of the Christian faith, and honour of our King and country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia, do by

[1] Bradford, p. 89.

these presents solemnly and mutually in the presence of God, and one of another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil body politic, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute, and frame such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the Colony, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witness whereof we have hereunder subscribed our names at Cape-Codd the 11 of November, in the year of the reign of our sovereign lord, King James, of England, France, and Ireland the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fifty-fourth. An° Dom. 1620."

This document was signed by forty-one men, heads of prospective houses, in the cabin of the *Mayflower*. There were twenty-five males on the passenger list of the *Mayflower* who did not sign this compact. Of these ten were servants, one of whom, William Butten, had died at sea. Thirteen were sons, presumably still minors, whose allegiance was assured through their fathers. The other two men who did not sign were Trevor and Ellis, "seamen hired to stay a year here in the country." As they were out for a definite period only, the Constitution did not much concern them. So it would seem that all the responsible men, including any malcontents, accepted this agreement and formed themselves into a civil body politic.

This act is justly regarded as significant, though it may not possess quite the character which an

historian like Bancroft attributes to it. He says: "This was the birth of popular constitutional liberty.... In the cabin of the *Mayflower* humanity recovered its rights and instituted government on the basis of 'equal laws' for the 'general good.'" [1] In view of the genesis of the document, this is perhaps a little extravagant. The aim of the covenant was to ensure the subordination of the individual to the common good rather than to assert popular constitutional liberty. But, though this assertion is not the express aim of the document, it is an essential feature of it. Though this covenant provides no adequate safeguards for constitutional liberty, it assumes that the whole community is the source of authority. The Pilgrims, as a matter of course, carried over the practice and idea of democracy from their ecclesiastical to their civil polity.

It is worth while to notice two other features of this incident. In the first place, it embodies the determination of the Pilgrims to constitute the State as distinct from the Church. The majority of the men who signed the document and formed the State were not members of their Church, though many no doubt became members, and most, if not all, of them were in sympathy with it. Secondly, it is a rare instance of a civil body politic actually constituted by a social contract. The theorists who built on the idea of the social contract, Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau, must, I think, have regarded the beginnings of these new communities as throwing light on the origins of older

[1] Bancroft, *History of the United States*, vol. i. p. 234.

societies. The Social Contract was not a purely imaginative conception. It played its part in founding new States across the Atlantic. Bradford regarded this compact as a surer basis for authority than the patent itself, presumably because their government was now founded on consent. It did not depend on authority conferred by a distant monarch. They had now the opportunity of choosing their own Governor, and the first act of this new body politic was to elect John Carver their Governor.

The change of destination which led them to take this step was in later years attributed to treachery. Writing about 1670, Morton thinks the Dutch bribed the captain of the *Mayflower* both to delay the voyage at the beginning and to direct it to Cape Cod rather than to Hudson's River in the end. The Dutch wished to reserve Hudson's River for their own colonists. But there seems no adequate ground for these suspicions. Bradford and Winslow did not entertain them. Captain Jones had no responsibility for the overmasting of the *Speedwell*. The Pilgrims themselves, or their agent, were to blame for that. The reluctance of Reynolds, the master of the *Speedwell*, to fulfil his contract is also intelligible without the hypothesis of Dutch bribery or of the connivance of Captain Jones. The landing at Cape Cod is sufficiently accounted for by the lateness of the season and the adverse character of the weather. The need for settling somewhere was the primary motive for abandoning the Hudson and accepting Plymouth in New England. Nor need we explain Bradford's

acquiescence in this change of plan by conjecturing, with Dr. Usher, that he wished to escape the jurisdiction of the Virginia Company,[1] and hoped to get a better grant or patent from the New England Company which he knew to be in process of formation. The actual circumstances of time and weather explain this landing at Plymouth, without any supposition either of Dutch bribery or shrewd calculation on the part of the Pilgrims. It is quite likely that the possibility of landing in New England was in the minds of the leaders from the outset. Weston had urged them to go to New England rather than Virginia, because of the excellence of the fishing. Captain John Smith had offered his services to the Pilgrims, and naturally thought they would have avoided many hardships and mistakes if they had accepted his offer. But they declined, primarily on the ground of expense. They told him "his books and maps were much better cheap to teach them than himself." So they must have brought Captain Smith's books with them, including no doubt his description and map of New England, as well as his account of Virginia. They were not altogether unprepared for a landing in New England, and accepted the change without much hesitation or regret.

[1] Dr. Usher says (p. 73): "The patent gave them individually no rights in America whatever, but conferred all the privileges upon the merchants with whom they had so decidedly quarrelled at Southampton." This seems to be a mistake. The patent from the Virginia Company which the Pilgrims brought with them was obtained by them before they negotiated with Weston and his group of merchants. The patent did not subordinate the Pilgrims to the adventurers.

Their first task was to discover a suitable site for their settlement. On the very day they arrived they set fifteen or sixteen armed men on shore, "some to fetch wood, for we had none left: as also to see what the land was and what inhabitants they could meet with." [1] They met no inhabitants. The land consisted of sandhills, which reminded them of the dunes of Holland; but the soil was better. They brought back store of juniper wood for burning. However, the narrow spit of land which divided the bay from the sea was clearly not the place for their permanent abode. They would need to explore the bay. On Monday, November 13th, the whole ship's company went on shore for the first time, to refresh themselves, and the women had a comprehensive washing-day, or, as Mourt quaintly says, "Our women went on shore to wash, as they had great need." The more thorough exploration of the shores of the bay was to be undertaken in the shallop, and here they met with an unfortunate delay. The boat was not seaworthy, and "it was sixteen or seventeen days before the Carpenter had finished her." Not to lose time, a party under Captain Miles Standish set off to explore on foot. On this expedition, on November 15th, they had their first sight of Indians, but did not succeed in getting into touch with them. On Thursday, the 16th, they entered a deep valley [East Harbour in Truro], where they saw a deer and found springs of fresh water, "of which we were heartily glad and sat us down and drank our first New England water with as much delight

[1] Mourt's Journal, Arber, p. 410.

as ever we drank in all our lives." On the same day they came across fields in which the Indians had planted corn. They also found a rude sepulchre and the remains of a hut or two. More immediately important was the discovery, in a heap of sand, of " a fine great new basket, full of very fair corn of this year : with some thirty-six goodly ears of corn, some yellow and some red, and others mixed with blue, which was a goodly sight." They took away as much of this store as they could carry, filling even their pockets. This proved to be a very lucky find. It became clear that they could depend neither on supplies from England nor on procuring corn from the Indians by traffic. They had to look to the harvests of their own industry. This first basket of corn gave them their seed-corn. " And here is to be noted a special providence of God and a great mercy to this poor people, that here they got seed to plant them corn the next year, or else they might have starved, for they had none nor any likelihood to get any until the season had been past." [1] The next day, Friday, was marked by a minor adventure. " As we wandered, we came to a tree where a young sprit was bowed down over a bow and some acorns strewed underneath. Stephen Hopkins said, It had been to catch some deer. So as we were looking at it, William Bradford being in the rear, when he came looked also upon it : and as he went about, it gave a sudden jerk up and he was immediately caught by the leg. It was a very pretty device, made with a rope of their own making, and having a

[1] Bradford, p. 83.

noose as artificially made as any roper in England can make, and as like ours as can be: which we brought away with us." [1] They made their way back through woods, where they noted the presence of partridges and wild geese and ducks, and when they reached the shore "we shot off our pieces and the long-boat came to fetch us. Master Jones and Master Carver, being on the shore with many of our people, came to meet us. . . . This was our first Discovery."

The second discovery was made in the shallop. The whole party of explorers numbered thirty-four, as Master Jones and some sailors went, as well as twenty-four of our own men. The weather was cold. They found some more corn, and some Indian wigwams. They explored thoroughly the south shore of the bay, but they still found it difficult to fix on a place for their permanent settlement. The harbour in which they lay was good for boats, though not for ships. They had found good corn-ground ready to their hands. Cape Cod seemed to be a good place for fishing. They were particularly impressed by the number and the tameness of the whales. "There was once one, when the sun shone warm, came and lay above water, as if she had been dead, for a good while together, within half a musket-shot of the ship. At which two were prepared to shoot to see whether she would stir or no. He that gave fire first, his musket flew in pieces, both stock and barrel: yet, thanks to God, neither he nor anyone else was hurt with it, though many were there about. But when the

[1] Arber, p. 416.

whale saw her time, she gave a snuff and away ! " [1] Not only were the fishing prospects good, but the narrow point of land that ran out to Cape Cod was easily defensible, and seemed healthy. Consequently many favoured landing on the nearest shore, especially as it was now the end of November. But others thought it would be folly to settle where they were without first seeing whether there was a better site and harbour on the north side of the bay. So a third voyage of discovery was made on December 6th. They had to endure bitterly cold weather, and they also had a first brush with the Indians, happily without casualties on either side. On December 11th (Monday) they ran into Plymouth Harbour. " We found it a very good harbour for our shipping. We march also into the land and found divers corn-fields and little running brooks. A place very good for situation." [2] December 11th was afterwards kept as Forefathers' Day. They reported progress to the main company, and the *Mayflower* moved across the bay on the 15th, and came to anchor in Plymouth Harbour on December 16th. Further examination of the shore confirmed the decision to settle there. The only obvious drawbacks were that wood had to be fetched a distance of 220 yards, and the *Mayflower* had to lie rather more than a mile off. The harbour was better for ships than their first anchorage had been, for ships of 70 or 80 tons could lie close by the shore at high tide. But the *Mayflower* drew too much water to be able to come very close. The hauling of wood was a serious matter, as they

[1] Arber, p. 424. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 435.

had no beasts of burden. They would have to spend a good deal of time both in carrying wood, and in going backwards and forwards to and from the ship. However, they set to work without further delay. They began to erect the first house for common use on Christmas Day, which they did not observe as a holiday.

"Monday, the 25th day. We went on shore. Some to fell timber, some to saw, some to rive; some to carry: so no man rested all that day." They proposed to build a fort on the mount, Burial Hill, and the first street, Leyden Street, was to run down from the mount towards the shore. There were to be two rows of houses and garden plots. By persuading the single men to join some family they arranged the community in nineteen families. There were to be nineteen houses, and nineteen sites were allotted, the size being calculated at the rate of about forty-five square yards per person. The Common House was nearly finished by January 9th, 1621, and on this day each family went to work on its own house. The work went forward in spite of serious hindrances. "The weather was such that seldom could we work half the week." But perhaps they were fortunate to get as many working days. The winter was less severe than the average, and but for this the whole plantation would probably have perished. As it was they suffered severely from illness, and about half their number died during the winter months. This epidemic, for it amounted to that, was due to exposure. Coughs and colds contracted through wading from the boats to the shore in cold weather,

issued in scurvy, rheumatic fever, and something like galloping consumption. In December six died, in January eight, in February seventeen, and in March thirteen. Of the forty-one men who signed the compact, twenty-one were dead before the end of March. Of the male servants eight out of nine succumbed. Of the eighteen married women only five survived the first sickness, though the death of Mistress Dorothy Bradford was due to misadventure and not to the epidemic. She was unhappily drowned in the bay, while her husband, William Bradford, was away on the third discovery. Of twenty-two young men and boys they lost seven, but only one young girl died out of a total of eleven. These figures reveal how severe were the ravages of disease. The strain on the energies of the little community may be imagined. At a critical period, when all their strength was needed for building and planting, they had sometimes scarce enough able-bodied persons to tend the sick. In the time of their greatest distress only six or seven were available. Brewster and Miles Standish were a tower of strength to the colony in this emergency. It may well be that the Pilgrims levelled the graves, or even grew wheat on them, to conceal their weakness from the Indians. The captain of the *Mayflower* stood by them, and postponed his departure. His crew was not very helpful, and its members themselves suffered much from the disease. But it was almost impossible for the colonists to do without the *Mayflower*, since their own houses rose but slowly. On January 14th the Common House, just completed, caught fire, and the whole

building had to be reconstructed. It was not until Wednesday, March 21st, that the Pilgrims finally left the *Mayflower*. On that date they brought away their carpenter and their remaining stores. On April 5th they despatched the *Mayflower* for England, where she arrived early in May.

Captain Jones left the colonists in a somewhat easier and more hopeful frame of mind. The sickness had abated with the return of spring. They had now their houses built in their main street. Then they had come into friendly relations with their nearest Indian neighbours. Their first encounter with Indians had not been satisfactory. Fear of the Indians had compelled the colonists to organise their defences under Captain Miles Standish. He had been appointed Captain on February 17th, and on February 21st they brought on shore one of their great pieces, called a Minion, and put it in position. This "great piece was a cannon weighing 1,200 lbs., having a bore of $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and firing 340 yards." But when they were considering military orders and perfecting their defences a month later, they were interrupted by a visitor, who proved to be a real asset to them. On Friday, March 16th, "we determined to conclude of the Military Orders. . . . And whilst we were busied thereabout we were interrupted again. For there presented himself a savage, which caused an alarm. He very boldly came all alone and along the houses, straight to the rendezvous, where we intercepted him. . . . He saluted us in English and bade us 'Welcome.' He was the first savage we could meet withal." They learnt a good deal

from this Indian, whose name was Samoset. In particular they learnt the reason of the absence of inhabitants in the neighbourhood of Plymouth and Cape Cod. "He told us the place where we now live is called Patuxet, and that about four years ago, in 1617, all the inhabitants died of an extraordinary plague, and there is neither man, woman, nor child remaining: as indeed we had found none. So as there is none to hinder our possession, or to lay claim unto it." [1] This seemed to the Pilgrims providential, as if God had cleared the ground for them to possess it. It confirmed the decision to plant their settlement in Plymouth.

Samoset's services did not end with a welcome and the imparting of information. He introduced to the Pilgrims another Indian, named Squanto,[2] who spoke English better than Samoset. Squanto attached himself to the colony, and proved a real acquisition. "He showed them how to plant their corn, where to take fish and other commodities, and guided them to unknown places and never left them till he died." [3] Through the instrumentality of these two Indians, the colonists came into touch with the nearest Indian overlord, or great Sachem, Massasoyt, with whom they made a formal and simple treaty of peace. Its terms were these:

"1. That neither he nor any of his should injure or do hurt to any of their people.

"2. That if any of his did any hurt to any of

[1] Arber, p. 452.

[2] The name sometimes appears as Tisquantum.

[3] Bradford, p. 95.

theirs, he should send the offender that they might punish him.

" 3. That if anything were taken away from any of theirs, he should cause it to be restored; and they should do the like to his.

" 4. If any did unjustly war against him, they would aid him; if any did war against them, he should aid them.

" 5. He should send to his neighbours confederates, to certify them of this, that they might not wrong them, but might be likewise comprised in the conditions of peace.

" 6. That when their men came to them, they should leave their bows and arrows behind them." [1]

This practically ensured their safety from the Indian side, at least for the time, and when the *Mayflower* left for England, the prospect on this side was full of hope. Though their Indian neighbours were too few and too distant for the planters to realise all their expectations as to trade, yet they were friendly, and the way might soon open for missionary work among the savages, which was one of the objects the Pilgrims had in mind from the beginning.

Before proceeding further with the history, we may consider a question which is raised in an interesting form by Dr. Usher. What kind of colony did the Pilgrim Fathers intend to establish, and how far were their plans modified by the circumstances of their voyage and the place and time of their arrival? Dr. Usher thinks they meant " to establish a permanent trading port,

[1] Bradford, p. 94.

which should maintain itself by fishing and bartering beads, toys, and cloth with the Indians of the district." "For agriculture they possessed only a few hand-tools. They brought no beast of burden, no plows, cart, or harness of any description." "Indubitably they were not adequately equipped to found a colony which would depend entirely for subsistence upon what it might raise in the New World. They were equipped to build houses, cultivate gardens, catch fish in nets, and trade with the Indians for furs." But though trading and fishing were to be their chief occupations, they were not well prepared even for these occupations. "Astonishing to relate, not one of the passengers had ever fished." "Apparently an expedition whose prime object was the catching of fish, had arrived with no practical knowledge of the sort of fishing which New England afforded." By inference, Dr. Usher, while praising the Pilgrims for their endurance and their virtue, condemns their want of foresight and common sense. He makes them out to have been rather simple and even stupid folk. He admits, however, that though they lacked everything but virtue, and had not brought with them the most necessary supplies, yet for trading, for cooking, for the work of carpenters and blacksmiths, and for defence they brought "a remarkably adequate supply." Were the Pilgrims really as stupid as Dr. Usher would have us suppose?

In the matter of fishing the passengers of the *Mayflower* were certainly unskilled and ill-equipped. But Dr. Usher omits to mention that for fishing they had counted on the *Speedwell*, and on the

crew of the *Speedwell*, who broke their contract. The passengers never intended to devote themselves primarily to fishing. It is true that in the terms of their agreement some of their number were to be chosen to man their ships and boats at sea, but they had counted on the assistance of skilled sailors in this, and their skilled assistants had deserted them. The expedition as originally planned had made very adequate provision for fishing, and it was their misfortune, not their folly, which compelled them to undertake the work without a suitable boat, without proper nets, and without much previous knowledge or skill. If, however, the Pilgrim Fathers had never intended any more than a permanent trading port, then it was foolish of them to sail at all without the *Speedwell*. But surely Dr. Usher is mistaken both as to the place which trading and fishing took in the original plans, and as to the nature of the settlement they had in mind. There can be no reasonable doubt that from the first the Pilgrims intended to found a self-supporting colony, with its own agriculture and industries; the articles of association make this perfectly clear. Fishing and trading bulked large in their initial plans because, first, only in this way could they earn the profit which should pay their debt to the adventurers, and, secondly, all colonies had to subsist by trade and fishing during their first years, until they were properly settled. The Pilgrims appear to have taken with them very much the kind of supply which Captain John Smith advised men to take if they proposed to begin a plantation, and not merely a trading-

port. It is not surprising that the Pilgrims did not bring any live-stock with them. They did not bring carts and ploughs either. This also is not surprising, as they brought the tools to make both, and looked to find the materials for both in the country. It is obvious that the *Mayflower* did not bring and could not bring all that they would eventually need. But they brought the essential equipment for beginning a permanent self-supporting colony, and for maintaining the pioneers by trade during the first few years. There was no change in their main plan, but for fishing and trading they were less well prepared on arrival than they had been when they set out. Consequently, they had to rely on the supplies they could raise themselves from the very beginning, more than they expected to do when they made their plans and laid out their capital. Such a miscalculation was not due to lack of knowledge or foresight, but to the accidents and mishaps with which they had to contend in carrying out their purpose.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FIRST CRITICAL YEARS

Though they had survived the first winter they had not surmounted all their difficulties. For the next five or six years their situation was destined to be critical, and the margin between success and failure was often a very narrow one. Endurance, industry, and faith carried them through difficulties and discouragements which seemed at times insupportable. For three years they had to battle with the recurring threat of famine. Shortage of corn was the chief trouble, and lack of salt seems to have caused serious irregularity in their supplies of meat and fish. Their relations with the adventurers were a constant source of trouble and anxiety to them until the partnership was dissolved and a financial composition of the adventurers' claims agreed upon in 1627. The adventurers did comparatively little for them, and made great and impatient demands upon them. The additional settlers whom the adventurers sent out to them from time to time came poorly furnished with goods, and were many of them unsuitable in character for the undertaking in which they proposed to share. Independent parties also arrived to settle near them, whose conduct and ill-success complicated

the situation for the men of Plymouth. Then the relations they established with the Indians were not easy to maintain. Tribes beyond those with which they were more immediately in touch proved a doubtful quantity and a source of danger. These elements reacted upon one another. The shortness of food was aggravated by new arrivals, themselves ill-supplied. Ill-conducted neighbours at once increased the peril of famine and created difficulties with the Indians. Lack of support from the adventurers, coupled with their insistence on immediate trading profits, added to the disadvantages under which the planters laboured. So long as they were associated with the adventurers they had to accept such colonists as the adventurers chose to send, and this was embarrassing and resulted in dissensions within the colony itself. Besides all these difficulties they had to meet the discouragements of loss of cargoes at sea, of damage by fire, and the threatened loss of harvest through drought. The annals of the first few years are the simple record of the patience with which they bore the weight of these troubles and fought their way through them.

The *Mayflower* left them busy planting corn. This they did Indian-wise, under the directions of Squanto, who showed them how to set it and also how to manure the ground with fish, called alewives, which were apparently the same as herring. The methods employed were laborious. They are thus described : " Goodwin has calculated that 100,000 holes were dug with a hoe or mattock ; as they buried in each two or three alewives, caught in

the town brook, they must have carried up the steep banks into the fields some forty tons of fish. A part of the labour of planting, which Squanto taught them, was the necessity of watching the corn-fields to keep the wolves from digging up the alewives." [1] Some twenty acres were planted in this way, and, as Dr. Usher says, it was a prodigious amount of labour for twenty-one men and six boys, all of whom had been sick the greater part of the winter. The seed thus sown turned out well, but the English seed, wheat and peas, which they brought with them, came to nothing.

While directing their April sowing their Governor, Mr. John Carver, succumbed to a sun-stroke, his wife dying two months later. This was a severe blow to the colony, but they found an able successor in William Bradford, who held office almost continuously until 1656. It was undoubtedly a great advantage to the colony to continue under the same leadership for so long. Captain Smith notes how colonies suffered from frequent changes in Governors. This was more than once a cause of failure. But in other colonial ventures Governors proved burdensome also because they were appointed, not by the colonists, but from the home-country. They were apt to be dignitaries imposed on the colony, and more concerned for their own dignity than for the welfare of the colony. The plantation at Plymouth succeeded partly through the steady maintenance of the same leadership, and partly through the leadership being entrusted by the colonists to one of themselves, to one who

[1] Usher, p. 91.

had irrevocably thrown in his lot with them. In this case, at least, democratic leadership proved more successful than leadership imposed by an external authority.

On May 12th the first marriage took place in the colony. Edward Winslow, who had lost his wife in the great sickness, married Mistress Susanna White, who had lost her husband in the same epidemic. It was a civil function, performed by the magistrate and not by the minister. The Separatists had, from their own study of Scripture, come to the position that it was no part of a minister's duty to solemnise marriages. They were confirmed in their view by finding that the Dutch treated marriage as a civil contract. Apparently they assumed that marriage must be either a civil contract or a religious ceremony, and could not be both. So the religious solemnisation was dropped altogether, as there could be no doubt that the State must take cognisance of marriage. The point of their objection to the English custom was that the clergy were obliged to perform a civic act as a religious ceremony, whether the parties to the contract were members of the Church or not. They objected to the confusion of State and Church, and to the requirement laid upon ministers of the Gospel.

This was not the only point on which their previous convictions had been confirmed by their experience in Holland, nor was this the only laudable custom of the Low Countries which they saw fit to adopt when they built up a body politic of their own. To take another example, they had

found in the Dutch Reformed Church a National Church which avoided the anomalies of the English parochial system and did not identify the boundaries of Church and State. "Here, in Amsterdam," John Robinson wrote to Joseph Hall, "they do not gather Churches by streets and town-rows as you do in England." The practice of the Dutch disproved the argument for the Elizabethan settlement drawn from social necessity or political expediency. There was no need to confound Church and State in this way, and at Plymouth they were resolved not to countenance this confusion. They never made citizenship dependent on Church-membership. Miles Standish was a full citizen from the first, and he did not join the Church. There were others similarly placed. When we come to consider the development of the social and political life of the colony, we shall find further traces of Dutch influence, in the law of inheritance, in the registration and transfer of holdings in land, and in the growth of the constitution. But this marriage of E. Winslow and Susanna White is the first occasion on which the example of the Dutch consciously determined the Pilgrim policy.

The summer was a time of quiet progress. The newly married bridegroom was called upon to undertake, with John Hopkins, a mission to their Indian ally, Massasoyt, in order to assure his friendship. A subsidiary chief, Corbitant, proved unfriendly, and Squanto and another friendly Indian, named Hobomac, had to be rescued from him by forcible measures. Three of his braves were wounded, but, as Samuel Fuller dressed their

wounds and cured them, the incident led to more cordial relations in the long run. These visits to Indian encampments brought the Pilgrims into touch with more powerful tribes, the Narragansetts and the Massachusetts. Winslow explored the Massachusetts territory and regretted that they had not settled farther north than Plymouth. "But it seems that the Lord, Who assigns to all men the bounds of their habitations, had appointed it for another use." The district was destined to receive the great Puritan migration which took place between 1629 and 1640.

Their situation towards the close of the summer was much easier, and Bradford thus describes it: "They began now to gather in the small harvest they had, and to fit up their houses and dwellings against winter, being well recovered in health and strength, and had all things in good plenty: for, as some were thus employed in affairs abroad, others were exercised in fishing, about cod, bass, and other fish, of which they took good store, of which every family had their portion. All the summer there was no want." [1] There was also a good supply of wild-fowl, and Indian corn was comparatively plentiful, "which made many afterwards write so largely of their plenty here to their friends in England, which were not feigned but true reports." These reports may be represented by a letter from W. Hilton, who wrote home enthusiastically later in the year, and sent his letter by the ship in which he came.[2]

[1] Bradford, p. 105.

[2] *Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers* (Everyman), p. 253.

"LOVING COUSIN,

"At our arrival at New Plymouth in New England, we found all our friends and planters in good health, though they were left sick and weak with very small means, the Indians round about us peaceable and friendly, the country very pleasant and temperate, yielding naturally of itself great store of fruits, as vines of divers sorts in great abundance. There is likewise walnuts, chestnuts, small nuts and plums, with much variety of flowers, roots, and herbs, no less pleasant than wholesome and profitable: no place hath more gooseberries and strawberries, nor better. Timber of all the sorts you have in England, doth cover the land, that affords beasts of divers sorts, and great flocks of turkeys, quails, pigeons, and partridges: many great lakes abounding with fish, fowl, beavers, and otters. The sea affords us as great plenty of all excellent sorts of sea-fish, as the rivers and isles doth variety of wild-fowl of most useful sorts. Mines we find to our thinking, but neither the goodness nor quality we know. Better grain cannot be than the Indian corn, if we will plant it upon as good ground as a man need desire. We are all free-holders, the rent-day doth not trouble us; and all those good blessings we have, of which and what we list in their seasons for taking. Our company are for the most part very religious, honest people; the Word of God sincerely taught us every Sabbath: so that I know not anything a contented mind can here want. I desire your friendly care to send my wife and children to me,

where I wish all the friends I have in England, and so I rest,

" Your loving kinsman,
" WILLIAM HILTON."

There was a manifest inclination to put too favourable a view on the situation of the colony. This was subsequently embarrassing, for new arrivals were much disheartened when they discovered the keenness of the struggle for a bare livelihood, and the colony as a whole did not apparently husband their corn as carefully as they might have done.

On November 11th, 1621, the *Fortune*, a vessel of 55 tons, arrived with Robert Cushman and thirty-five new planters on board, the latter mostly young men. " The plantation was glad of this addition of strength, but could have wished that many of them had been of better class, and all of them better furnished with provisions : but that could not be helped." This brought their numbers up to nearly 100 again, and was a welcome reinforcement, though it soon compelled a smaller ration of corn.

The *Fortune* had sailed in July, two months after the *Mayflower* arrived in England. So the *Fortune* brought the first communication which the planters had had from the adventurers. This took the form of a querulous letter from Thomas Weston. The *Mayflower* had returned without a cargo. How the planters, under the circumstances, could have filled her with beaver, or clapboard, or fish, is difficult to see. But nothing except immediate

profits would satisfy the adventurers. Weston wrote to John Carver—the Governor who had died since the *Mayflower* sailed—"That you sent no lading back with the ship is very strange, and very properly resented. I know your weakness was the cause of it: and I believe more weakness of judgment than weakness of hands. A quarter of the time you spent in discoursing, arguing, and consulting would have done much more: but that is past." He then implored them to send home a good cargo by the *Fortune*, and also to accept the conditions of agreement proposed by the adventurers. Bradford replied to this letter, and began by speaking of the death of Mr. Carver. This led him to remind the adventurers that if they risked their property, others risked their lives. He explained the reasons which compelled them to keep the *Mayflower* so long in the country, and dwelt on the difficulties which the great sickness had brought upon them. "And now to be so greatly blamed for not freighting the ship touches us near and discourages us much. But you say you know we shall plead weakness: and do you think we had not cause? Yes, you tell us you believe it—but that it was more weakness of judgment than of hands! Our weakness herein is great, we confess; therefore we will bear this rebuke patiently, with the rest, till God send us wiser men." He denied that they wasted time in discoursing and arguing, and finally he announced the acceptance of the adventurers' conditions. This decision of the planters was due, partly to the fact that the adventurers clearly needed some further

assurance, as the emptiness of the *Mayflower* had disheartened them, and partly to the fact that those who remained at Leyden had now come round to Cushman's view, and urged the acceptance of the adventurers' terms. Bradford hoped that by signing the agreement, and by sending back the *Fortune* speedily with a good cargo, he would induce the adventurers to send out further supplies without much delay.

Cushman himself doubtless came over to try to persuade his friends at last to honour the bargain he had made in their name. He remained in the colony for a month, while the *Fortune* lay at anchor. During that time he did his best by public exhortation to promote public spirit among the colonists. On his return to England he published a discourse on this subject, which he delivered during his stay in Plymouth. It is interesting, as a specimen of the lay preaching which the Pilgrims encouraged, and also as a revelation of the kind of communist spirit which he and the leaders desired to foster. Two paragraphs will suffice to convey the gist of the discourse.

"Now, brethren, I pray you, remember yourselves, and know that you are not in a retired, monastical course, but have given your names and promises one to another, and covenanted here to cleave together in the service of God and the King. What, then, must you do? May you live as retired hermits, and look after nobody? Nay, you must seek still the wealth of one another, and inquire, as David, How liveth such a man? How is he clad? How is he fed? He is my

brother, my associate; we ventured our lives together here, and had a hard brunt of it; and we are in league together. Is his labour harder than mine? Surely I will ease him. Hath he no bed to lie on? Why, I have two; I'll lend him one. Hath he no apparel? Why, I have two suits; I'll give him one of them. Eats he coarse fare, bread and water, and I have better? Why, surely we will part stakes. He is as good a man as I, and we are bound each to other; so that his wants must be my wants, his sorrows my sorrows, his sickness my sickness, and his welfare my welfare; for I am as he is. And such a sweet sympathy were excellent, comfortable yea, heavenly, and is the only maker and conserver of churches and commonwealths; and where this is wanting ruin comes on quickly.

"The country is yet raw; the land untilled; the cities not builded; the cattle not settled. We are compassed about with a helpless and idle people, the natives of the country, which cannot, in any comely or comfortable manner, help themselves, much less us. We also have been very chargeable to many of our loving friends, which helped us hither, and now again supplied us; so that, before we think of gathering riches, we must even in conscience think of requiting their charge, love, and labour; and cursed be that profit and gain which aimeth not at this." [1]

Cushman had to meet the obvious objection in communist enterprise: the probability that the

[1] *Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers* (Everyman's Library), pp. 236, 237.

diligent will have to bear the burden of the drones. He urged that, by working together, the bees may inspire the drones to work, that some drones so-called are not really drones, but, it may be, weaklings, and that in the last resort slackers can be reported to the Governor, and the apostolic rule, proportioning food to industry, can be enforced. For the time at least the Pilgrims were content to accept the communist experiment which the adventurers forced on them. Until Cushman came, though they had laboured as a community under the direction of the Governor, yet they had kept the two days a week for themselves, and each family had laboured at its own house. But now, under the agreement, all labour was to be for the common good, and no steps were to be taken towards private ownership or even private occupation and use of land.

They pursued this communal system for a couple of years, but in 1623 they decided to modify it so far as corn-raising was concerned. It was then agreed that each man should plant corn for his own household and trust to themselves for that. In all other things they were to go on as before. A parcel of land was assigned to each family for this purpose, though it was not made over to a particular family in perpetuity. When once they had made this concession to private enterprise, they experienced no further shortage of corn. They even acquired a surplus for trading with the Indians. Bradford's comment on their experiment in communism is certainly interesting: "The experience that was had in this common course and condition,

tried sundry years, and that amongst godly and sober men, may well evince the vanity of that conceit of Plato's and other ancients, applauded by some of later times ;—that the taking away of property, and bringing in community into a common wealth, would make them happy and flourishing; as if they were wiser than God. For this community (so far as it was) was found to breed much confusion and discontent, and retard much employment that would have been to their benefit and comfort. For the young men that were most able and fit for labour and service did repine that they should spend their time and strength to work for other men's wives and children, without any recompense. The strong, or man of parts, had no more in division of victuals and clothes than he that was weak and not able to do a quarter the other could ; this was thought injustice. The aged and graver men to be ranked and equalised in labours, and victuals, clothes, etc., with the meaner and younger sort, thought it some indignity and disrespect unto them. And for men's wives to be commanded to do service for other men, as dressing their meat, washing their clothes, etc., they deemed it a kind of slavery, neither could many husbands well brook it. Upon the point all being to have alike, and all to do alike, they thought themselves in the like condition, and one as good as another ; and so, if it did not cut off those relations that God hath set amongst men, yet it did at least much diminish and take off the mutual respects that should be preserved amongst them. And would have been worse if they had been men of another condition. Let none object

this is men's corruption, and nothing to the course itself. I answer, seeing all men have this corruption in them, God in His wisdom saw another course fitter for them." [1]

It is true that other circumstances helped to relieve the situation, but it cannot be denied that the stimulus of family responsibility, and family co-operation, was needed effectively to provide adequate supplies of food. Though the Calvinist's emphasis on human depravity is not popular at the present time, it is more honest and truthful in its outlook than many more optimistic estimates of human nature, and no communism can succeed which ignores the facts the Calvinist was resolved to face.

Robert Cushman sailed for England in December on the *Fortune*, which was well laden with good clapboard and two hogsheads of beaver and otter skins. It was valued at £500. Unhappily the ship was waylaid by the French and the whole cargo seized. The ship and its company at length reached England on February 14th or 17th, 1622, but robbed of all the cargo.

Soon after the departure of the *Fortune* the colony was menaced by the Narragansett Indians, who resented the independence which Massasoyt had secured by his alliance with the English. The ultimatum of the Narragansetts was brought by a messenger in the form of " a bundle of arrows hid about with a great snake-skin." The Governor sent them " a round answer that if they had rather have war than peace they might begin when they

[1] Bradford, p. 135.

would : they had done them no wrong, neither did they fear them, or should they find them unprovided."[1] The snake-skin was returned, full of bullets, and this seemed to have over-awed the Narragansetts. However, this alarm led the colonists to perfect their military defences. They impaled their town and "made flankers in convenient places." From these bulwarks, or jetties, the whole town could be defended. The watch was more strictly kept, and the company was divided into four squadrons for the purpose. These arrangements were perfected in February 1622. A little later in the year there was suspicion of trouble with the Massachusett Indians and with Massasoyt, but it appeared that some intrigues and misrepresentations of Squanto were at the bottom of it. When these were cleared up, friendly relations were re-established, and an opportunity for good trade followed.

Towards May 1622 their stock of provisions began to run low. Their hopes were raised by the appearance of a fishing-vessel in the bay, only to be dashed to the ground again when it brought seven passengers and some letters from Thomas Weston, but no victuals. Weston's letters were written in January, before the *Fortune* or any news of her reached England. The letters showed that the adventurers were unwilling to take any further risks until they received something tangible from the colonists. Moreover, Weston was disposed to draw out, and instead of seeing the first plantation through, as he had often sworn to do, he was busy

[1] Bradford, p. 111.

starting fresh expeditions of his own. He asked the colonists to give his seven passengers seed-corn and salt, of which they really had none to spare, and also to welcome some more people whom he proposed to send out on his own account under a new patent. He ended by saying: "I find the general [*i.e.* the bulk of the adventurers] so backward, and your friends at Leyden so cold, that I fear you must stand on your own legs and trust, as they say, to God and yourselves." In a second letter he announced the intention of the adventurers to break up their first partnership and reform the company. At the same time he insisted on the colonists signing the original agreement. Bradford was much disturbed by these letters. It looked as if Weston, and perhaps the rest of the adventurers, meant to desert them. He decided not to communicate these letters to the public, for fear of panic. He also feared that if, after this disclosure, Weston arrived and began a new plantation, men would despair of Plymouth and migrate to the new site. Bradford's discreet silence shows how he interpreted his responsibility as Governor. He did not regard democracy as involving complete and constant publicity. He therefore said nothing about the letters, and made what provision he could for the seven passengers, who were landed too late to plant corn for themselves. At the same time he got into touch with a Captain John Huddleston, master of a fishing-ship, who was friendly to the men of Plymouth, and who had sent them a letter announcing the massacre of settlers in Virginia. Through him Winslow was able to secure

from the fishing-fleet some addition to their supplies. Winslow came back with " as much bread as amounts to a quarter of a pound a person a day till harvest." This was their ration for the rest of the summer. Winslow, when he came back from his visit to the fishing-fleet, found the colony very weak and trying to live on shell-fish. However, this opportune if small addition to their supplies carried them through the summer of 1622.

In June or July Mr. Weston's new planters arrived, sixty lusty young men. They brought with them further letters from Mr. Weston, in which he announced that he had sold his share in the original company to the other adventurers, and " so I am quit of you and you of me." He advised the planters to have nothing further to do with the adventurers. Though he thus announced his intention of helping Plymouth no further, he still expected Plymouth to help him and his new plantation. With difficulty other adventurers and Robert Cushman got letters through to Bradford by this ship, warning him against Weston's attempt to end the partnership, and also urging him not to do much for the new plantation. " Mr. Weston hath quite broken off from our company, through some discontents that arose betwixt him and some of our adventurers, and hath sold all his adventures, and hath now sent three small ships for his particular plantation. The greatest whereof, being 100 tons, Mr. Reynolds goeth master and he with the rest purposeth to come himself; for what end I know not. The people which they carry are no men for us, wherefore I pray you entertain them

not, neither exchange man for man with them, except it be some of your worst. He hath taken a patent for himself. If they offer to buy anything of you, let it be such as you can spare, and let them give the worth of it. If they borrow anything of you, let them leave a good pawn, etc. It is like he will plant to the southward of the Cape, for William Travore hath lavishly told but what he knew or imagined of Capewack, Mohiggen, and the Narigansets. I fear these people will hardly deal so well with the savages as they should. I pray you, therefore, signify to Squanto that they are a distinct body from us, and we have nothing to do with them, neither must be blamed for their faults, much less can warrant their fidelity." [1] This caution was further commended by John Pierce, an adventurer in whose name the patent for Plymouth had been obtained from the New England Company. Bradford reflecting that, after all, they would never have been able to start at all, if it had not been for Mr. Weston's initiative, and feeling in consequence that they owed some gratitude to Mr. Weston for his past services, however shabbily he treated them subsequently, resolved to help these new planters as far as he could. Natural feelings of hospitality to new-comers in a strange land prompted the same conclusion. Weston's men were entertained at Plymouth for a couple of months, while their exploring party went farther north. They were not altogether comfortable guests. They were careless of their hosts' resources, and even raided the unripe corn. They also talked big, boasting

[1] Bradford, p. 122.

of their own strength as a band of young men, and contrasting the weakness of the Pilgrims, with women and children to care for. They anticipated more speedy success for themselves. Their reconnoitring pioneers went north and pitched on Wessagusset, now Weymouth, in Massachusetts Bay. Thither they went in the autumn of 1622.

The Plymouth colonists had planted sixty acres with corn in this year, but the crop proved disappointing. It failed partly through want of strength to tend it, partly through other business, and partly by being much stolen. The crop was so scanty that by January 1623 they had to look round for other supplies. Captain Standish was sent out to trade with the Indians. From some of his experiences it began to appear that the Indians were becoming restive, and even hostile. Throughout the autumn the Indians complained of the proceedings of Weston's men, and later they came to despise them and conceived the plan of destroying all the English while they were still weak. In his journeys in search of corn Standish found his life threatened more than once. Towards the end of February the overseer of Weston's men sent a letter, revealing the pitiable condition of his colony. In March suspicions as to Indian designs were confirmed by disclosures from Massasoyt. He fell sick, and E. Winslow was sent to visit him. Happily, Winslow was able to relieve Massasoyt from his trouble, and the Indian chief, in gratitude, revealed the plot of the Massachusett Indians against Weston's men. On March 23rd, being a yearly Court Day, Bradford

communicated the news to the whole company, and with their consent despatched Standish and a small armed band to rescue Weston's men. Standish himself killed two or three insolent braves, and brought away Weston's planters, with no loss to the colony. The bulk of Weston's men resolved to go north to Monhiggin, and to get into touch with the fishing-fleet and work their way home. Standish gave them as much corn as they could spare, " not taking of them the worth of a penny. With some few of their company, who desire it, he returns to Plymouth."

In the fighting at Wessagusset, perhaps seven or eight Indians were killed. John Robinson was much distressed when this news reached Leyden, as it boded ill for the missionary enterprise of the Pilgrim Church. He wrote from Leyden on December 19th, 1623, as follows :

" Concerning the killing of these poor Indians, . . . oh ! how happy a thing had it been if you had converted some before you had killed any : besides, where blood is once begun to be shed, it is seldom staunched of a long time after. You will say they deserved it. I grant it : but upon what provocations and invitements by those heathenish Christians ? Besides, you, being no magistrates over them, were to consider not what they deserved but what you were by necessity constrained to inflict. Necessity of this, especially of killing so many . . . I see not. Methinks one or two principals should have been full enough, according to that approved rule, the punishment to a few and the fear to many. Upon this occasion let me be

bold to exhort you seriously to consider of the disposition of your Captain, whom I love, and am persuaded the Lord in great mercy and for much good hath sent you him, if you use him aright. He is a man humble and meek amongst you, and towards all in ordinary course. But now if this be merely from an human spirit, there is cause to fear that by occasion, especially of provocation, there may be wanting that tenderness of the life of man (made after God's image) which is meet. It is also a thing more glorious in men's eyes than pleasing in God's or convenient for Christians, to be a terror to poor barbarous people : and indeed I am afraid lest by these occasions others should be drawn to affect a kind of ruffling course in the world. I doubt not but you will take in good part these things which I write, and as there is cause make use of them." [1]

Fortunately, the killing of the Indians did not lead to any lasting feud, nor did it prevent some individual colonists from undertaking missionary work among the Indians later. Though Standish might be open to Robinson's cautious and kindly criticism, he had a fairly thorough knowledge of the Indians, and usually handled them with tact. Even his slaying of three braves seemed rather to have given him a salutary reputation for prowess.

In the spring of 1623, which witnessed the break-up of Weston's colony, the Pilgrims began to plant on their new plan, whereby each family sowed for itself. More corn was planted than ever. By the time their corn was planted their victuals were

[1] Bradford, p. 164.

spent. They did not know at night where to have a bit in the morning. For three or four months they were to be practically without bread or corn. For the last time, they were to be reduced to a diet primarily of fish and ground-nuts. To add to their distress, their new harvest was threatened with drought. Under date the middle of July, it is recorded that, "notwithstanding our great pains and hopes of a large crop, God seems to blast them: and threaten sorer famine by a great drought and heat, from the third week in May to the middle of this month, so as the corn withers." At this time the courage of the most steadfast seems to have wavered. It looked as if they were to be beaten at last, for if this harvest failed the colony could scarcely face the winter. In this extremity the Governor and his assistants appointed a Day of Humiliation and Prayer. The religious exercises lasted for eight or nine hours. Before the day was out promise of rain appeared. "For though in the former part of the day it was very clear and hot, without a cloud or sign of rain, yet towards evening, before the Exercise is over, the clouds gather, and next morning distil such soft and gentle showers as give cause for joy and praise to God. They come without any thunder, wind, or violence: and by degrees: and that abundance continuing fourteen days, with reasonable weather, as the earth is thoroughly soaked, and the decayed corn and other fruits so revived as it is astonishing to behold, and gives a joyful prospect of a fruitful harvest." [1] The danger of famine practically never

[1] Bradford, p. 142 *n.*

recurred after 1623. So this year marked a definite turning-point in their history. The problem of subsistence had at last been solved, and this great difficulty once met seemed a proof of God's care and approval.

Soon after this day of humiliation, and while the food crisis was still acute, two ships arrived, the *Ann*, and a pinnace, the *James*, which was intended to serve the purposes for which they had originally bought the *Speedwell*. These ships brought over some sixty persons who wished to join the colony. "Some being very useful and become good members of the body: of whom the principal are Master Timothy Hatherly and Master George Morton, who came in the *Ann*: and Master John Jennys, who came on the *James*. Some were the wives and children of such who came before: and some others were so bad we are forced to be at the charge to send them home again next year." Master W. Pierce, the captain of the *Ann*, also brought encouraging letters from Robert Cushman and from thirteen of the adventurers. Among other things the latter said: "Let it not be grievous to you that you have been Instruments to break the ice for others, who come after with less difficulty. The honour shall be yours to the world's end. We have you always in our breasts, and our hearty affection is towards you all: as are the hearts of hundreds more which never saw your faces: who doubtless pray your safety as their own." The ice was not thoroughly broken when this letter was received, and the new-comers were distressed with the cold comfort which was all the

Pilgrims could offer them. "The best dish they could present to their friends was a lobster or piece of fish, without any bread, or anything else but a cup of fair spring water." The high expectations of the fresh arrivals were much damped by contact with the actual facts. However, they had come better provided with necessaries than some previous companies. It was agreed that the passengers of the *Ann* should keep their provisions for themselves, while they should have no claim on the harvest, which was by this time recovering so splendidly. The harvest itself finally dispelled any fear of want.

On the *Ann* there came over some men who did not form part of the company of sixty already mentioned. In their letter the adventurers introduced them thus: 'There also come to you some honest men to settle near you, on their own account, which if we had not allowed would have been to wrong both them and you. . . . In regard to these private planters we have made two stipulations: First, the trade in skins is to be confined to the colonists till the dividend: secondly, while they may settle near you, it shall be at such distance as is neither inconvenient to the apportionment of your lands nor to you easily assembling together in case of need." Bradford assigned habitations to these private venturers within the town on condition they obeyed the laws of the colony, shared in its defence, and contributed to the maintenance of government. They were to be exempt from the general employments of the community, but, in accordance with the agreement with the

merchants, they were to be debarred from trade with the Indians so long as the trading partnership between adventurers and planters continued. The admission of these private planters brought a new and disturbing element into the plantation. They were in the colony and not of it. They were not responsible for its government, and they were critical. Their disappointment with the conditions they found prevailing at New Plymouth took shape in complaints of hardship which were as exaggerated as W. Hilton's description of the country as a land of plenty. Some went back in the *Ann*, when she returned in the autumn of 1623. Those who stayed caused dissension in the colony. Some belonging to the general body now began to think they would be better off if they were on their own. The private settlers conveyed the impression that the company in England was going in future to support them rather than the general body. Bradford met this by offering to release men from the general body on specified conditions, which were certainly not harsh. Very few availed themselves of the opportunity to become private settlers. However, when Winslow, who had gone to England in the *Ann* on the business of the colony, returned in 1624, he reported difficulties with the adventurers. He did indeed bring over with him in the *Charity* the first cattle, three heifers and a bull, and also some supplies, but he had had great difficulty in persuading the adventurers to do anything at all, and his departure had been delayed and his business hindered. The adventurers were becoming apathetic, if not worse than apathetic. They were

evidently being prejudiced by complaints against the colony and its administration.

The chief heads of criticism were drawn out and answered in satirical vein by Bradford in the following document:

"1 obj. was diversity about Religion. Ans.: We know no such matter, for here was never any controversy or opposition, either public or private (to our knowledge), since we came.

"2 ob.: Neglect of family duties on the Lord's Day. Ans.: We allow no such thing, but blame it in ourselves and others; and they that thus report it should have showed their Christian love the more if they had in love told the offenders of it, rather than thus to reproach them behind their backs. But (to say no more) we wish themselves had given better example.

"3 ob.: Want of both the sacraments. Ans.: The more is our grief, that our pastor is kept from us, by whom we might enjoy them; for we used to have the Lord's Supper every Sabbath, and baptism as often as there was occasion of children to baptise.

"4 ob.: Children not catechised nor taught to read. Ans.: Neither is true; for divers take pains with their own as they can; indeed, we have no common school for want of a fit person, or hitherto means to maintain one; though we desire now to begin.

"5 ob.: Many of the particular members of the plantation will not work for the general. Ans.: This also is not wholly true; for though some do it not willingly, and other not honestly, yet all do

it; and he that doth worst gets his own food and something besides. But we will not excuse them, but labour to reform them the best we can, or else to quit the plantation of them.

"6 ob.: The water is not wholesome. Ans.: If they mean not so wholesome as the good beer and wine in London (which they so dearly love), we will not dispute with them; but else, for water, it is as good as any in the world (for ought we know), and it is wholesome enough to us that can be content therewith.

"7 ob.: The ground is barren and doth bear no grass. Ans.: It is here (as in all places) some better and some worse; and if they well consider their words, in England they shall not find such grass in them, as in their fields and meadows. The cattle find grass, for they are fat as need be; we wish we had but one for every hundred that here is grass to keep. Indeed, this objection, as some other, are ridiculous to all here which see and know the contrary.

"8 ob.: The fish will not take salt to keep sweet. Ans.: This is as true as that which was written, that there is scarce a fowl to be seen or a fish to be taken. Things likely to be true in a country where so many sail of ships come yearly a fishing; they might as well say there can be no ale or beer in London be kept from souring.

"9 ob.: Many of them are thievish and steal one from another. Ans.: Would London had been free from that crime, then we should not have been troubled with these here; it is well known sundry

have smarted well for it, and so are the rest like to do if they be taken.

"10 ob.: The country is annoyed with foxes and wolves. Ans.: So are many other good countries too; but poison, traps, and other such means will help to destroy them.

"11 ob.: The Dutch are planted near Hudson's Bay, and are likely to overthrow the trade. Ans.: They will come and plant in these parts also, if we and others do not, but go home and leave it to them. We rather commend them than condemn them for it.

"12 ob.: The people are much annoyed with mosquitoes. Ans.: They are too delicate and unfit to begin new plantations and colonies that cannot endure the biting of a mosquito; we would wish such to keep at home till at least they be mosquito proof. Yet this place is as free as any, and experience teacheth that the more land is tilled, and the woods cut down, the fewer there will be, and in the end scarce any at all."[1]

Whether the adventurers were really much impressed by these criticisms, they used them as an excuse for discontinuing their support of the first colonists, and even for seeking to undermine their position. There is little doubt that some of the adventurers definitely desired to wrest the control of the plantation out of the hands of Bradford and the Leyden group, and to entrust it to others who had recently gone over as private settlers. Their reasons would be twofold; first, the suspicion that the original settlers were not as active in trading

[1] Bradford, p. 161 f.

as they might have been, so that a change of management might increase profits, and, second, lack of sympathy with Separatism. If there was any hope of the colony succeeding, many of the adventurers were anxious to make it a Puritan rather than a Separatist centre. Consequently Winslow found the adventurers opposed to sending John Robinson and the remaining members of the Leyden Church to join their brethren in New Plymouth. John Robinson wrote to Bradford by the *Ann*, and told him there was now no prospect of his getting over unless the men of Plymouth could defray the cost. At the same time the adventurers sent over in the *Charity* with Winslow a Mr. John Lyford, a clergyman presumably with Puritan leanings, who, they hoped, might secure the confidence of the colonists and wean their affections from John Robinson. He came over practically as a candidate for the pastorate.

Lyford was not chosen pastor, but he was made welcome. He shared the work of preaching and teaching with the elder, William Brewster. A allowance was assigned for the maintenance of himself and his family. He was called, along with Brewster, to the Governor's council. But it soon appeared that he was using his advantages to work against the existing administration. He was closely associated with Mr. John Oldham, a private settler, who had been largely responsible for giving such a bad impression of the colony to the adventurers in England. Oldham had, however, admitted his mistake, and along with Lyford was frequently consulted by Bradford in matters of government.

But Lyford and Oldham showed their hand by openly sympathising with any offender against authority. When the time came for the *Charity* to sail, Bradford went after the ship in the pinnace, and examined the letters which Lyford and Oldham had written home. In these letters, of which he took copies, he found full evidence of their plot to overthrow both Church and State in the colony. Having secured his evidence, and having discovered that Lyford had also tampered with the letters which Bradford himself was sending home, Bradford waited his time. It was not long before Lyford and Oldham took the step of holding a separate public meeting on the Lord's Day without consulting the Governor or the Church. Though the Pilgrims would not have welcomed, and probably would not have permitted, the setting up of a separate meeting in any case, it is clear that the great objection which Bradford felt to Lyford's action was the tacit ignoring and defiance of the existing authorities in Church and State. This he thought was the first move towards the intended reformation in Church and Commonwealth. He decided to wait no longer. He called together the general court of the freemen, and charged Lyford and Oldham with their plot against the community. They stoutly denied any conspiracy, and Oldham attempted a counter-attack by urging malcontents to vote down the Governor. Bradford at once produced their letters, and after that not one of their faction dared to stand by them. That was not the end of the trouble, for Lyford had strong backing in England, which

eventually had to be withdrawn for very shame when Winslow, who defended the colonists' cause in England, produced evidence of Lyford's immorality and unfitness for the ministry. In the beginning of 1625 Oldham and Lyford were finally expelled from the colony.

The exposure of the plot tended to unite the colonists and the private settlers more closely than before. It also made the Pilgrims more watchful about admissions and more careful lest their hospitality should be abused. Lyford had charged them with narrowness, and they had indignantly denied it. He had declared that the Church desired that no one should live here except its members, and that, if any honest men came over who were not Dissenters, they soon disliked them. The Pilgrims denied this. They welcomed any who would live peaceably with them, and they had many among them who were not Church members, and whom they liked well. The colony never departed from this attitude. But naturally Bradford became more concerned to see that unattached new-comers did not harm the Church or sap their political independence. The episode likewise made Bradford and the colonists generally eager to end their association with the adventurers. So long as the adventurers controlled their development, they would have to accept unsuitable colonists, and wait indefinitely for reunion with their remaining friends from Leyden. In the spring of 1625 came the news of John Robinson's death. Both he and they had counted on his coming, and no one who realises the greatness of

the man can fail to regret that he was not permitted to settle in New England. It is not unlikely that disappointment hastened his end. In any case, the apathy or the intrigue of the adventurers detained him in Leyden. If, then, any of the remnant at Leyden were to see the New World, the friends who had gone before must secure liberty of action. Therefore Isaac Allerton was despatched in 1626 to come to an agreement with the adventurers and end the partnership. In 1627 the partnership was dissolved on the understanding that the colonists paid the adventurers £1,800 in nine annual instalments of £200 each. The colonists also accepted responsibility for sundry debts amounting to £600. Captain John Smith says that the colony had cost £7,000 up to that time. If so the trade of the colony must have been fairly successful in spite of the loss of cargoes through piracy. For the adventurers are likely to have asked for all that was due.

This arrangement did not end their financial troubles, but it made them masters in their own house. They were still liable to interference from the King, but they no longer needed to study the wishes of any other outside body. They could control their life as a colony and develop their trade as they thought best. The new agreement also fostered their internal union. For the colonists became virtually a merchant-company to which practically all the inhabitants of Plymouth belonged. They might at this time have attempted a purge of the colony if they had been acting in a narrow, sectarian spirit. But, with real statesman-

ship, Bradford seized the opportunity to weld the members of the colony into one. So "it was decided to form an equal partnership, which should include all heads of families and all self-supporting single men, young or old, whether Church members, non-Church-members, or anti-Church-members. These men enrolled as "Purchasers," then received each one share in the public belongings, with the right to take a share for his wife and another for each of his children. These shares were bound for so much of the public debt as the trade should not pay, and to them belonged everything pertaining to the colony, except each person's personal effects. These purchasers were found to number (about) 156–57 men, 34 boys, 29 matrons, and 36 girls. This did not include servants and indentured persons, of whom there may have been twenty or thirty." [1] The colony was still a small one, but its immediate future was secure, and it was on the road to financial independence. The year 1627 thus marks a definite stage in its development.

[1] Goodwin, *The Pilgrim Republic*, pp. 289, 290.

CHAPTER IX

THE SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENT OF THE COLONY

It is not possible, within the limits of this book, to survey the later history of the colony in detail. We must be content to describe some main features of its development.

To turn first to the economic and financial side of its life, the ending of their partnership with the adventurers left the colonists free to divide the land and cattle among them. The adventurers had waived any claim to share in these things, which they had possessed under the terms of the original agreement. So the colonists now arranged themselves in twelve groups of twelve or thirteen persons each, and in June 1627 they assigned the cattle by lot to each group, "a cow to six persons or shares and two goats to the same." Similarly, twenty acres of tillable land were assigned to each person or share, in addition to single acres already owned or cultivated. The meadowland was still to be held and used in common. This division gave great satisfaction, and each family could now devote itself to developing its own considerable holding.

Their trading rights the colonists, or purchasers, made over to their leaders, William Bradford, Miles Standish, Isaac Allerton, Edward Winslow,

William Brewster, John Howland, John Alden, and Thomas Prince. It will be noted that all these came over in the *Mayflower*, wth the exception of Thomas Prince, who sailed in the *Fortune*. The first-comers, and mainly the Leyden element, provided the responsible leadership. These eight Undertakers, as they were called, were given exclusive trading rights for six years, and undertook to pay off the colony's debts in that time. They chose Allerton to act for them in England. He was sent over in the autumn of 1627 to procure a patent for a trading-port on the Kennebec and transact other business. For a year or two all went well. In 1629 the outlook was so encouraging that they ventured to use some of their profits in bringing over those of their fellowship in Leyden who still desired to join them. In August of this year the *Mayflower* brought over thirty-five Leyden people, and a smaller detachment arrived in the *Lion* in the following May. These were the last contingents from the original Pilgrim Church.

To accomplish this removal of their friends the Undertakers had entered into partnership again with James Sherley and a few other of the adventurers who had always been friendly to them. But this partnership proved a misfortune. In the first year of financial independence they cleared £400 of their indebtedness—a sixth of the total sum which they owed. But after 1628 things went wrong, mainly through the dishonesty of Allerton and Sherley. Allerton began to trade on his own account as well as on account of the Undertakers. But he did not keep his private business

transactions separate from his activities as representing his friends. He proceeded to act on the principle that if he made a profit he was acting in his private capacity, while if he incurred a loss he was acting on behalf of the colony. Naturally the debts were not rapidly diminishing under this system. His friends were patient with him, partly because he was an original settler, a forefather, and partly because he had married Brewster's daughter, and they shrank from hurting the feelings of the elder. However, in 1631, they had to supersede Allerton, and Winslow took over his work as agent. Even then things did not go smoothly. Sherley, who received and disposed of the beaver and otter skins which they sent over, would give no account of his dealings. For two or three years Winslow tried to get a statement of accounts from him. Between 1631 and 1636 they consigned to Sherley more than 12,000 lb. of beaver and more than 1,000 otter skins. At a low valuation such shipments should have been worth at least £10,000. On Sherley's figures their total indebtedness incurred during the period amounted to £7,770. He could give no explanation of the disposal of the difference. His two London partners claimed £1,100 apiece, and Plymouth naturally referred them to Sherley, who should have had more than that sum in hand. However, the Londoners could get nothing out of Sherley. One or two further shipments were made, first to Sherley, and then to Andrews and Beauchamp, the other London partners. Even so, Plymouth was still in debt according to their partners. In 1637 they relieved

Sherley of his agency. He was no longer to buy or sell on behalf of the colony. He was of course dissatisfied, and continued to make claims on Plymouth. To avoid scandal and bitterness the colony accepted a further statement of outstanding claims in 1642, and at length, in 1646, they paid off all their creditors. The details of this tedious business fill many pages of Bradford's history. The conduct of the Pilgrims is marked by a singular patience. "The debts [of the Pilgrim Republic] had been inflated, its funds embezzled, its trade defrauded, and its confidence betrayed; but it had borne every burden without shrinking, and had preferred to endure fraud and robbery rather than risk any sacrifice of honor. Its leaders took care that every chance of wrong should fall on themselves rather than on the public creditors who had treated them so shamefully." [1]

Their ability to meet what were often outrageous demands is a proof of the prosperity of the colony. The trade in beavers was clearly a subsidiary interest. The agriculture of the colony enabled the Pilgrims to be practically self-supporting and to forgo the profits of trade. A scurrilous person named Morton, whom Standish had arrested in 1628 for selling firearms to the Indians, and who had been expelled from New England, wrote a book called *New England's Canaan*, in 1637, in which he had the grace to admit that the Pilgrims " deserved some commendations in that they have furnished the country so commodiously in so short a time, although it hath been but for their own

[1] Goodwin, *The Pilgrim Republic*, p. 417.

profit, yet posterity will taste the sweetness of it and that very suddenly." The colony must have advanced in its standard of comfort even while the profits of its trade were being absorbed by others than the colonists. If the growth of their agricultural interest made them anything but profiteers, their general desire for quiet, and their wish not to attract the attention of the authorities in England also made them willing to satisfy claims, however doubtful, rather than go into the law-courts. For they were still without a Royal Charter. Allerton had spent £500 in a vain attempt to get one, and legally their hold on their property in New England was insecure. But, beyond all this, they manifestly endeavoured to live in the spirit which St. Paul commends, the spirit which suffers wrong rather than bring dishonour on the Christian name.

The fraud of English partners was not the only handicap which the Pilgrims had to face in developing their trade. They had to defend their trading rights within the limits of their patents against incursions by Dutch and French interlopers, to say nothing of fellow-Englishmen belonging to other colonies. With the Dutch their relations on the whole were friendly. It was the governor of a Dutch colony who introduced to them wampum,[1] as a good means of trade with

[1] Wampum was practically Indian money. "This article consisted of beads made chiefly from the shell of the quahog. As only a small part of the shell was purple the beads of that colour had an enhanced value. The shell was broken into small pieces, which, chipped to a somewhat regular form, were drilled, ground to a round shape, and finally polished."—Goodwin, p. 305.

the Indians. But all the same, even the Dutch were jealous of any trading-stations which the Pilgrims opened. Their station on the Kennebec they had to maintain in the teeth of Dutch opposition. The French in 1631 plundered, and four years later seized, their station called Penobscot. A nasty incident between Plymouth and the settlers in Massachusetts arose when a man named Hocking poached on Plymouth's preserves. In an affray, for which Hocking was responsible, Hocking lost his life, and Massachusetts took up the case. Later on, with no show of right, the Massachusetts men deprived Plymouth of a centre which they had opened on the Connecticut River. Partly through the loss of its outposts, and partly through other colonies developing all round it, the fur-trade of Plymouth fell off considerably by 1640.[1]

It is noteworthy that, in Bradford's life-time at least, the colony never did much with fishing as a source of trade. Bradford himself seems to have been prejudiced against it by some conspicuous failures. He concentrated on trade with the Indians for beaver and otter skins. The colony never realised Captain John Smith's expectations of huge gains from fishing. This may have been due to the fact that the interests and talents of the colonists did not develop in this particular direction. Fishing meant that they had to hire sailors to stay in the colony for the season, and these sailors were often a source of trouble. Some of the most serious fires from which Plymouth suffered in the early days were due to drunken

[1] See Usher, p. 234.

sailors. Bradford therefore inclined to concentrate on barter with the Indians rather than on fishing.

On the side of law and government the beginnings of Plymouth colony were naturally informal enough. The men who signed the *Mayflower* compact formed the first body of freemen, and the General Court or Assembly of Freemen was the supreme authority for legislation, for practical decisions of policy, and for the administration of justice. But from the first wide discretionary powers were entrusted to the Governor, who was the executive authority. He combined almost all offices in his own person. He was at once secretary and treasurer, as well as chief justice. The military command was entrusted to Miles Standish, as captain, but almost every other State function was in the hands of the Governor, at least during the first ten or twelve years, and the Governor was usually Bradford. Bradford seems to have consulted the General Court as and when he thought best. There was, however, one regular Yearly Court day, and, since the Governor had to be re-elected annually, there was no real danger of his abusing the confidence reposed in him. In so small a company of more or less intimate friends there was no need for formality or elaborate written records. But their methods of procedure would be determined by their experience of self-government in church-life. A meeting of the General Court would doubtless resemble Church-meetings at Leyden. There would be the same atmosphere, the same informal type of discussion. They could

then for a number of years proceed without a code of law or a written constitution.

In general they followed English law and custom as near as may be, but in some particulars they were influenced by the Dutch. As we have already seen, Dutch example encouraged them to treat marriage as a civil contract, requiring only a civil sanction from the first. The influence of Holland may also be traced in the legal protection afforded to the economic interests of women. "It was enacted in Plymouth in 1636 that lands might be seized to pay the debts of a deceased man, but that the portion reserved for the support of his wife and family was to be untouched. And in 1646 the consent of the wife became necessary to the sale of lands or houses." [1] The Pilgrims further followed the Dutch in establishing something like equality of inheritance, instead of adopting the English custom of primogeniture whereby land went to the eldest son. "In 1627, when [the Dutch Governor] De Rasières visited Plymouth, he found that 'In the inheritance they place all the children in one degree, only the eldest son has an acknowledgment for his seniority of birth.'" [2] The public registration of transfers of land was adopted in Plymouth in 1636, after a Dutch model. "The philanthropic regulations in Plymouth as to pensions, the care of pauper children, and of poor and distracted persons were far in advance of the age, and can only be ascribed to Dutch influence." [3]

In taking cognisance of certain moral offences,

[1] Cockshott, *The Pilgrim Fathers*, p. 117.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 117. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 332.

the Pilgrims were guided neither by Dutch nor by English precedents. They, in effect, conformed the standards of the State to the standards of their Church-discipline. This is particularly true of the severity with which they punished sexual intercourse outside the marriage bond. Previous betrothal and subsequent marriage did not mitigate the punishment of those who were found to have been guilty of intimate relations before marriage. Other offences which were treated seriously were drunkenness, swearing, lying, and the use of diabolical language. Typical entries of cases of lying are the following: "1658. William Hailstone, tailor, was fined 30*s.*, with 23*s.* costs, on charge of telling three lies in a petition to the court: but one of these proving true, 10*s.* and all the costs were remitted. 1661. Ralph Smith, of Cape Cod, while in the way of duty, having lied about seeing a whale, fined 20*s.* 1662. George Crispe's wife, for telling a lie, 'but not a pernicious lie—only unadvisedly'—discharged." [1] They had no prison until after 1640. The use of the stocks and fines were their usual punishments. The first offence was committed by John Billington, who was convicted before the whole company in 1621 for his contempt of the captain's lawful command. "For which he is adjudged to have his neck and heels tied together: but upon humbling himself and craving pardon: and it being the first offence: he is forgiven." [2] On June 18th, Edward Doty

[1] Goodwin, p. 603.

[2] Prince, *History of New England*, p. 38. (Billington was later on the first to suffer the death-penalty. He was found guilty of murder in 1630.)

and Edward Leister were condemned to a similar punishment for duelling. But the length of the sentence was reduced from twenty-four hours to one. The tempering of justice with mercy, exhibited in these first two cases, was characteristic of Plymouth. There was for a long period a homely adaptability about their administration of justice. Trial by jury was established by a law passed on December 27th, 1623, and the General Court of Freemen was thus relieved of judicial business. The right of summary jurisdiction in cases involving not more than 10*s.* was vested in the Governor and magistrates in 1636, and this probably stereotyped previous practice.

It was in 1636 that they first revised their laws, and defined the position of their State officers. This revision of their laws was prefaced by a statement of the principle of government by consent. After referring to the *Mayflower* compact, and to a patent issued in favour of W. Bradford by the Council of New England in 1630, the revision committee asserted that in accordance with these documents "no imposition, law, or ordinance shall be made or imposed upon or by ourselves or others, at present or to come, but such as shall be made or imposed by consent, according to the free liberties of the state and kingdom of England, and no otherwise." [1] Here, then, is a clear statement of the main principle of democratic government. As to the laws they put on record, the enactments of previous years were simple enough. The first was the law already noticed which es-

[1] Goodwin, p. 401.

tablished trial by jury. The second, dating from 1626, forbade the exportation of food and lumber without an official permit. A third substituted boards or palings for thatch in the roofing of houses. This was presumably to lessen the danger of fire. A law of 1632 required a man to fence his cultivated land and keep firearms. Another law of 1633 made drunkenness in one's own house a finable offence and limited the sale of strong drink. Other laws were added in 1636 of an equally simple character. The proving of wills was regularised: a standard dry-measure, the Winchester bushel, was set up: the original allotments of land were declared exempt from creditors: and jurors were to receive sixpence a case.

On the constitutional side the position of the Governor was more clearly defined in 1636, and the assistants or magistrates who were first appointed at Bradford's request in 1624 became now the Governor's Council. The duties of Secretary and Treasurer were no longer added to those of the Governor and discharged by him in person. The General Court was still the ultimate legislative authority. "All new laws or changes were to be made by the freemen in town's meeting." Matters were propounded at one meeting, and, unless urgent, were decided at the next. The Governor and his Council deliberated and voted with the General Court, and Plymouth was therefore governed by a single assembly.

There was a further important constitutional development in 1638, when the growth of towns at some distance from Plymouth made regular

attendance of freemen at court difficult, and led to the adoption of a representative system. It was only with great reluctance that Bradford consented to the founding of new townships. He desired to keep Plymouth together. But Plymouth was not, in point of fact, an advantageous site either for trade or agriculture, and as Plymouth itself filled up there was an inevitable tendency to move out. Indeed, in 1644 the question was raised of abandoning Plymouth altogether, and Bradford's resolve never to leave their first settlement was the chief factor in defeating the proposal. After 1630 other towns sprang up within the Plymouth patent which threatened to rival Plymouth itself. The first of these townships was Duxbury, where Standish and Alden settled in 1631. Marshfield was the next. There were already six of these towns in being by 1638, and it was then decided that a representative body should be established, in which Plymouth should have four members, and each of the towns two. Freemen living at a distance could no longer attend the General Court with any regularity. But freemen appointed for the purpose could be expected to take a proper share in the business of the colony. Only freemen were eligible as representatives, but voting was not confined to freemen. In 1641 nine townships sent representatives, viz. Duxbury, Scituate, Taunton, Marshfield, Sandwich, Yarmouth, Barnstaple, Seekonk, and Nauset. This representative assembly now became the legislative authority for the colony, though the General Court, at which all freemen had the right to appear,

continued to exist. The relations of the two were not very clearly defined until after Bradford's death in 1657. Then the General Court was more or less confined to the work of supervising elections. The whole body of freemen remained small. In 1643 there were fewer freemen, or full citizens, in Plymouth in proportion to population than there were in Massachusetts, though it was harder to become a freeman in Massachusetts than in Plymouth. Probably then the numbers of freemen remained small, not so much because the moral tests of admission to citizen rights were high, but because citizenship involved responsibility and work rather than dignity or emolument.[1] Moreover, on the whole, Plymouth colonists were content with the leadership they enjoyed, and were generally agreed in their choice of leaders. There was little political animosity, and men did not press for the rights of citizenship, when the results of government were to their liking. At the same time it is disappointing to find that when the colony was well established the rights and responsibilities of citizenship were assumed by so few, and this in spite of the fact that the position of freemen was not confined to Church-members, as it was in Massachusetts.

The most important influence on the later history of Plymouth was exerted by the great Puritan migration during the period of the absolute rule of Charles I in England. The Leyden contingent who arrived in 1629 came over in the ships which carried a Puritan party under Endicott to Salem. So, Bradford says, these Leyden passengers enjoyed

[1] Cf. Goodwin, p. 415.

a double blessing. For not only did they have the joy of reunion with their own people in Plymouth, but "with them came other godly friends and Christian brethren, to plant a still larger harvest unto the Lord, for the increase of His Churches and people in these parts." The Puritan colonists were unfeignedly welcomed by the Pilgrims. The latter had broken the ice for others and were genuinely glad when the others came. In 1630 a large and well-equipped group of settlers landed under the leadership of John Winthrop. The occupation of Massachusetts Bay had begun in earnest. The stream of Puritan emigrants was maintained steadily up till the outbreak of the Civil War, when it abruptly ceased. The men who went to Massachusetts soon were in a position to throw out offshoots. In 1635 the colony of Connecticut was begun. Newhaven was founded in 1638. Yet another colony, rather different in character and origin, came into being under the guidance of Roger Williams in Providence in 1636. Providence was Separatist in principle, while Newhaven and Connecticut were both Puritan, the one more, the other less, rigid than Massachusetts itself. Providence became a kind of Cave of Adullam, in which gathered heretics expelled from the stricter Puritan colonies. In the course of twelve years rather more than 20,000 persons settled in New England.

The Puritans who colonised Massachusetts had come encouraged by Plymouth's example, but without any very cordial feelings for Plymouth. They were inclined to look down on the pioneers

as Brownists and Separatists. The Puritans were highly respectable persons, of good social standing. They desired to maintain their respectability, and did not wish to be too closely associated with humble folk, who were regarded with a good deal of suspicion and prejudice by honest Puritans and country gentlemen. It was to counter such suspicion, and to promote co-operation with Puritans in general, that John Robinson urged his followers to disavow and discourage the use of the title "Brownists." He thought that when the Puritans did come over, and could develop their own life freely, the men of Leyden would not find a great gulf fixed between themselves and their fellow-Christians. And so it proved. The initial aloofness of the Puritans who came with Winthrop was largely broken down when Samuel Fuller, the doctor of the Plymouth colony, went to the Bay to assist the new-comers in an epidemic which they had to combat during the first winter. Fuller was also a deacon in the Church at Plymouth, and he was able to advise the Puritans not only about the sickness but also about the formation of their church order, and the character of their public worship. As Robinson had anticipated, the Puritans, when they could act out their principles, approximated very closely both in church government and in public worship to the order established in Plymouth.

The approximation never amounted to complete identity. The Puritans were anxious to avoid any identification. They always denied that they were Separatists. John Cotton, one of the

ministers at Boston, drew a subtle distinction between Secession and Separation. He regarded the New England Churches as in the way of Secession but not of Separation. They never formally renounced their membership in the Church of England, but then neither did the Pilgrims. There was, however, a real difference. The Puritans retained, while the Pilgrims denied, the principle of a State Church. It is true that the Pilgrims desired to set up a State which would secure their Church, but they refused, as we have seen, to identify Church and State. Many settled in Plymouth, and some became freemen, who never joined the Church. The Puritans, on the other hand, aimed definitely at a Church State. No one could be a full citizen except he were a Church-member. Standards of orthodoxy were stricter in Massachusetts, and were applied much more rigorously than in Plymouth. Then differences in wealth and in social tradition tended to keep Boston and Plymouth apart. There was a homely atmosphere of social equality in Plymouth which was lacking in the Bay. When Bradford visited the new colony, as he did on the occasion of the arrival of Margaret Winthrop, Governor Winthrop's wife, he found the ceremony and dignity of Boston somewhat oppressive. While indebted to Plymouth, and acknowledging their debt, the Puritans still rather looked down on the Pilgrims as a socially and economically inferior group. Plymouth, conversely, was somewhat afraid of being overborne by Massachusetts, and was naturally jealous of its independence. Not that Plymouth avoided or discouraged intercourse with

the Bay. To say that after 1627 " it was the object of the Plymouth folk to hold themselves aloof lest their weaker brethren should be corrupted by the lax creed of the ordinary Puritans to north and south of them " [1] is absurdly untrue. For the ordinary Puritans to the north of them were stricter than themselves, and if the Pilgrims fought shy of association with them it was in order to retain their comparative breadth of outlook and not through fear of becoming lax. To the south of them was Roger Williams and his variety of eccentric followers, who could not be described as ordinary Puritans at all. The Pilgrim Fathers were sufficiently different from the Puritans who followed them to make them unwilling to merge their plantation in the later and stronger colony. But Plymouth did not nervously or sedulously hold itself aloof from its neighbours.

A number of circumstances tended to bring the young colonies closer together. The actual friction between them made some common authority and some general understanding very desirable. The patents granted by the New England Company were often hazily drawn. Different patents granted to different persons might be found, on examination, to embrace the same territories. Boundaries, especially between Plymouth and Massachusetts, were frequently in dispute. Trading rights also led to controversy. For their peaceful development the colonies needed some agreed demarcation of territories and spheres of influence. Their common dangers drew them together. The Indian

[1] See *Spectator*, for March 29th, 1919.

menace became apparent in the Pequod War of 1638, and demonstrated the necessity and the difficulties of co-operation. Then, at any time any one colony might be glad of the help of the others to resist attacks by the French or the Dutch. A further common interest, especially between 1634 and 1638, lay in the likelihood of interference from the side of Archbishop Laud and Charles I. These considerations led to the formation of a New England Confederation in 1643, which embraced Massachusetts, Plymouth, Connecticut, and Newhaven. Providence was refused admission, but the opposition to the inclusion of the colony which had put toleration into practice came from Massachusetts and not from Plymouth.

The primary purpose of the Confederation was defence, and especially defence against Indians. A council was formed with two representatives from each colony. Thus the principle was adopted which gave each colony equal representation. Representation was not proportioned to population. Naturally, the numbers of soldiers and the contributions to the cost of military operations varied with the man power and resources of each colony. In the terms of agreement as given in Bradford,[1] Massachusetts was normally to send 100 armed men, and each of the other three 45. When the alliance faced its first actual test, in the conflict with the Narragansetts in 1645, it was agreed to raise a force of 300 men, to which Massachusetts contributed 190, New Plymouth and Connecticut 40 each, Newhaven 30. Beyond

[1] Bradford, p. 418.

providing for common action in danger the commissioners had only one other function. They were to procure the return of fugitives to the colony from which they had fled. Otherwise their powers were purely advisory. But the Confederation exerted great influence, especially upon Plymouth. When the most populous and powerful colony, Massachusetts, adopted any particular course of policy, it was difficult to refuse co-operation, if that was desired, or to neglect her advice if that was offered. When Massachusetts determined to extirpate Quakers it was natural for Plymouth and the two other colonies to fall into line. Rhode Island, or Providence, alone stood out against the persecution of the Quakers, and it would have been harder for Rhode Island to take her own line if she had belonged to the Confederation. Goodwin says, with some justification: "This Confederation was a stronghold of bigotry, and did much to reduce liberally minded Plymouth to the level of her stern associates." [1] He adds: "From this period, but not alone from this cause, Plymouth history ceases to be of *continuous* interest." For Plymouth the Confederation meant the beginning of the process which ended in her absorption in Massachusetts in 1691. The original impetus towards liberty and spiritual adventure tended to be lost in conservative caution. Even Bradford contracted in his sympathies as he grew older, and consented in 1650 to restrictive measures towards new religious movements which he would hardly have adopted in his earlier days, and which he

[1] Goodwin, p. 417.

probably accepted in 1650 partly under the influence of Massachusetts.

The history of the Pilgrim Church presents some points of interest. At the beginning the Church was mainly dependent on the elder, William Brewster, both for teaching and practical guidance. As he was not a minister in the full sense of the term, he could not preside at the Lord's Supper. The Church, therefore, was deprived of the communion until a pastor had been duly appointed. They took no steps to fill the office of pastor during the first five years, as they hoped John Robinson would come to them. He was their pastor still. Since his coming was delayed they wrote to him in 1623 to ask whether Brewster might not conduct the Communion Service. Robinson advised against this as a breach of church order. The Pilgrims' pastor was as stiff as any modern High Churchman in insisting on the right maintenance of church order as they conceived it. None but a properly elected and ordained pastor should be permitted to administer the sacrament. But there was this difference between Robinson's view and High Anglican doctrine. The latter confines the function of administering the sacrament to the duly accredited minister, the episcopally ordained priest, because the sacrament is so important and normally necessary to salvation. Robinson, on the other hand, was stiff in maintaining order in regard to the communion, because, compared with preaching, the sacrament was of less importance. Since the Plymouth Church had the ordinance of the Word, they possessed the essential means of grace. The

want of the sacrament was regrettable, but could be endured since it was not essential to the maintenance of the spiritual health of the Church.

Though the Pilgrim Fathers were content for the moment to forgo the services of a pastor, in the hope of eventual reunion with their old pastor, the adventurers, as we have seen, endeavoured to forestall Robinson by putting in John Lyford. John Lyford was a moral failure and was eventually expelled. In 1625 John Robinson died, and the Church of Plymouth had therefore regretfully to seek for someone to fill his place. It was not easy to find a suitable man for the post. Robert Cushman had also died in England in 1625, and there was no one in England who exactly knew their needs and could appeal to individual clergy on their behalf. The Pilgrims had no church connexion in England, no set of people to whom they could resort to help meet their spiritual needs. When Allerton returned to England in 1626 he was commissioned to try to find a minister. In this, as in some other directions, Allerton proved a failure. He brought with him a good man who turned out to be insane, and had to be shipped home at the first convenient opportunity. In 1629 they almost literally picked up a minister. The Rev. Ralph Smith, who had migrated to Salem along with John Endicott and his company, found his services were not needed in Salem. He settled in great poverty at a place called Natasco. In June " some Plymouth people putting in with a boat at Natasco find Master Smith in a poor home that could not keep him dry. He desires them to carry him to Plymouth :

and, seeing him to be a grave man, and understanding he had been a minister, they bring him hither : where we kindly entertain him, send for his goods and servants, desire him to exercise his gifts among us : afterwards chose him into the Ministry, wherein he remains for sundry years." [1] The sundry years lasted till 1636. He seems to have been rather a dull man, not so good a preacher as Brewster, and the Church was not sorry to end his ministry by mutual agreement in 1636.

During Smith's period of work the Church also enjoyed for a time the services of the lively and erratic Roger Williams, who, after vacillating between Plymouth and Salem, being first at Salem, then at Plymouth, then again at Salem, found neither place to his taste, and settled in Providence to fashion a plantation more nearly to his heart's desire. To Williams belongs the eternal honour of condemning " the bloody tenet of persecution," and of founding a colony on the basis of complete toleration. But though his departure from Plymouth may not have been altogether voluntary, it does not appear that the break between Plymouth and Williams came on this issue. The circumstances under which he left are thus described by Morton : " By degrees venting divers of his own singular opinions, and seeking to impose them upon others, he, not finding such concurrence as he expected, desired his dismission to the Church of Salem, which, though some were unwilling to do, yet, through the prudent counsel of Mr. Brewster, the ruling elder there, fearing that his continuance

[1] Prince, vol. iv. p. 47.

among them might cause divisions, and there being many abler men in the Bay [*i.e.* in Massachusetts], they would better deal with him than themselves could, and, foreseeing what he professed he feared concerning Mr. Williams, which afterwards came to pass, that he would run the same course of rigid separation and anabaptistry which Mr. John Smith, the Se-Baptist of Amsterdam, had done; the Church of Plymouth consented to his dismission and such as did adhere to him were also dismissed and removed with him, or not long after him, to Salem." [1] The parallel with John Smyth was an apt one. Williams resembled Smyth in temperament, in eagerness of mind, and in love of vigorous and exhaustive argument, as well as in some particular opinions. The Pilgrim Fathers exhibit the same caution and the same humility of mind which prompted them to decline to follow Smyth, and to embrace the sober judgment of Robinson. Nor did their action at this time involve them in any lack of charity. It is probable that Williams was insisting on that explicit repudiation of the Church of England which the Pilgrims had hitherto declined to make a condition of membership in their Church. This was a point which Williams raised in Salem. If he raised it at Plymouth, then he was the champion of rigidity. If, however, he was standing for something more advanced, his advocacy is likely to have been uncompromising. At this stage Williams was quite capable, in Burke's phrase, of running into the greatest intolerance through a violence of toleration. It is manifest

[1] *Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers* (Everyman's Library), p. 103.

that he was insisting on conditions of Church-communism which the Pilgrims could not accept, and clearly they were the more truly catholic, even if Williams was endeavouring to dragoon everyone into a profession of toleration. Bradford continued to entertain a true regard for Williams, just as Robinson had continued to respect John Smyth. The dismissal itself did not destroy friendship, though, when Williams was finally expelled from the Bay, Winslow discouraged him from settling in Plymouth Colony, to avoid trouble with the Bay. The Pilgrims felt they could preserve Christian unity between themselves and Williams if they lived at a distance, and if they did not attempt to work together in the same Church.

About the period when Ralph Smith and Roger Williams ministered to the Church in Plymouth, the fortunes of the Church were adversely affected by the growth of other townships with Churches of their own. The Plymouth Church declined in numbers and influence. For the more energetic members of the community moved out of Plymouth and went to better sites. Consequently greater material prosperity and initiative were found in other centres. These daughter-towns and daughter-churches attracted abler ministers than Plymouth could secure. A man like Mr. Ralph Partridge, minister at Duxbury, was more distinguished and more influential in the colony than his contemporary ministers in Plymouth. However, Brewster retained his Church-communion and his eldership in Plymouth until his death in 1643, though he lived in Duxbury after 1630. So long as Brewster

held office, the Church at Plymouth would retain its leadership of the colony.

When Ralph Smith left in 1636, one John Reynor was appointed pastor, and held the position until 1654. With him was associated, in the years 1638–45, a remarkable man, a Cambridge graduate, named Charles Chauncey. He believed in baptising infants by immersion, and he declined to stay on as minister unless the Church adopted his views. The Pilgrims were willing that he should practise baptism by immersion, so long as John Reynor might continue to sprinkle the infants of those Church-members who desired it. "The Church conceded that immersion or dipping was lawful, but not so convenient in this cold country. But they could not allow that sprinkling . . . was unlawful and merely a human invention." [1] This did not satisfy Chauncey, and once more the Pilgrim Church showed itself more liberal, more tolerant and truly catholic than its minister. No precipitate action was taken. The matter was discussed with Mr. Partridge of Duxbury, and other Churches were consulted. In the end Mr. Chauncey withdrew to Scituate.

There was a vacancy in the pastorate between 1654, when John Reynor resigned, and 1667, when John Cotton was appointed, who held office when Plymouth ceased to be a distinct colony. During this interregnum the Church was dependent once more on its elder, Thomas Cushman, son of Robert Cushman. He had been chosen elder when Brewster died, and continued as elder until his death

[1] Bradford, p. 383.

in 1691. The eldership seems to have given more satisfaction than the ministry, though John Cotton, junr., was certainly a man of learning and ability. In his time the approximation of the Church in Plymouth to the Churches in Massachusetts had reached a point where there was no longer a consciousness of any real difference.

The relations of the Plymouth Church with the Puritan Churches in Salem, Boston, and other Massachusetts towns were friendly from the start, and were often cordially co-operative. The first Church at Salem in 1629, after consulting with the Plymouth physician and deacon, Samuel Fuller, organised itself very much on the Plymouth model. The entry in Prince's chronicle is as follows : " The religious people at Salem, designing to settle in a Church state, as near as they can to the rules of the Gospel : apprehend it needful for the thirty who begin the Church to enter solemnly into Covenant one with another, in the presence of God : to walk together before Him according to His Holy Word : and then ordain their ministers to their several offices to which they had been chosen. . . . And the Church of Plymouth invited to the solemnity, that the Church at Salem may have the approbation and concurrence, if not direction and assistance, of the other." Bradford and other delegates from Plymouth were prevented by contrary winds from being present at the solemnity when Skelton and Higginson were ordained pastor and teacher. But they arrived in time to give the right hand of fellowship and to wish all prosperity to the new beginnings. Higginson and Brewster

subsequently corresponded, and agreed on a common policy with regard to infant baptism and to the admission of young people to Church-membership.

There must have been fairly frequent interchange of views between Churches in the Bay and Churches of Plymouth, especially in any point of difficulty and controversy, whether in practice or doctrine. In many things Plymouth tended to conform to the standards of Boston, or of Massachusetts generally. The development of intolerance in Plymouth must be traced to Massachusetts. "During the early years of the colony there is no reason to believe that the Pilgrims persecuted any one. Apparently the earliest law restricting religious liberty is dated June 12th, 1650: it forbids persons 'meeting on the Lord's Day from house to house.'" [1] The assertion that the Pilgrim Fathers became exclusive and intolerant after 1627, as soon as they could control their own destinies, has not a shadow of foundation. The contracting of sympathy is first clearly indicated in 1650. There was worse to follow this first restriction on religious liberty. In response to a direct appeal from Massachusetts Bay in 1656, Plymouth in the following year instituted laws against Quakers, Ranters, and others. "The first law appears to have been passed June 3rd, 1657, and the persecution to have ceased in 1661. The various penalties inflicted were disfranchisement, banishment, committing to the House of Correction, the stocks or

[1] Article by Allen C. Thomas, in the *Journal of the Friends' Historical Society*, vol. xiii. no. 1, p. 38.

cage, seizing of books and property, fines and whipping, but in no case, so far as discovered, was there mutilation or death. Nor is there any reason to think that death was ever contemplated." [1] The Plymouth Colony cannot be cleared of the guilt of persecution, and cruel punishments were meted out to a number of Quakers. But it is to be remembered that Plymouth adopted this policy under pressure from Massachusetts. Isaac Robinson, the son of John, was strongly opposed to it. Timothy Hatherly, one of the assistants, entered an emphatic protest against it, as also did John Holmes, a Harvard graduate, who was called in 1658 to succeed Ralph Partridge in the ministry at Duxbury. These and other leaders had a large body of public opinion with them, though for a time they were overborne. This persecution was not the natural outcome of the Pilgrim faith and character, nor did Plymouth go the length of Massachusetts.

It is also to be noted that nearly all the passengers of the *Mayflower* were no longer alive. Unhappily John Alden, who still survived, defended the policy of persecution, and even Bradford, the only other survivor, is not clear in the matter. In 1655 he seems to have been anxious to bring Plymouth into line with Massachusetts, for he hesitated to accept re-election to the Governorship, on the ground that the people were lukewarm in maintaining a learned ministry. " He was troubled at the neglect of the deputies to adopt the Massachusetts system of universal taxation for this pur-

[1] Allen C. Thomas, *ibid.*

pose [*i.e.* for the maintenance of the ministry]. He also complained because they would not pass laws for the suppression of error." [1] These were both retrograde steps, and it is clear that Plymouth was disinclined to take them, and that the evil genius of the situation was the Puritan colony in Massachusetts Bay. Bradford died in 1657, and may have had no hand in the law against Quakers. But it is to be feared he would have approved. Dr. Usher seems to think that Plymouth became more liberal as it drew nearer to Boston. He also pictures Bradford mourning in his old age over "the gradual disappearance of the sharp ecclesiastical antagonism between Plymouth and the other colonies." [2] There is no more evidence for this sharp ecclesiastical antagonism between Plymouth and the other colonies than there is for the sharp contentions with the Dutch Reformed Church in which Dr. Usher discovered the Pilgrim Fathers engaged in Holland. This antagonism never existed. There were differences of outlook, which were all to the credit of Plymouth, and unfortunately it is clear from his attitude in 1655 that Bradford, so far from lamenting the disappearance of these differences, laboured to promote it. Since the disappearance of these differences meant a decay in Plymouth's liberalism, we may suitably lament it.

Bradford's anxiety about maintaining a learned ministry seems to lend support to another contention of Dr. Usher's, to the effect that the Pilgrims did not entirely approve of secular education and regarded university education as unnecessary.

[1] Goodwin, p. 456. [2] Usher, p. 274.

Dr. Usher suggests that Plymouth was opposed to university learning, especially since the Established Church made much of college degrees, and indeed required such a degree as a condition of ordination. The Pilgrims had a supreme contempt for ordination and all its requirements. But this is really a far-fetched interpretation of a simple matter. It is true that the Pilgrims did not do as much for education as their Puritan neighbours. Their school system developed slowly. There were several schools in the colony in 1630, but the obligation to provide schools was imposed on the towns first in 1662. The Pilgrims never attempted to found a University, whereas the early beginning of Harvard is one of the glories of Massachusetts. It is also true that, in upholding lay-preaching, and emphasising the call of the Church to the ministry, the Pilgrims denied that a university training was either sufficient or necessary to make a man a minister of Christ. But they had no such animus against university learning as Dr. Usher supposes. They preferred a man with a degree for their ministry when they could get him. The reason they did not create a University was not that they distrusted learning, but that they could not afford it. Their failure to provide for a learned ministry was due to economic rather than to ecclesiastical causes. Because they could not establish a University of their own, they had to go to Harvard. They had no hesitation in calling Harvard men to the ministry in their country, and that was one main reason why the Churches in the two colonies steadily drew closer to one another. That Plymouth

leavened Massachusetts to some extent is probably true. But the men of Plymouth were intellectually humble, and anxious to avoid controversy. If they dismissed Roger Williams, to be dealt with by the abler men of the Bay, it is not surprising that they submitted themselves in the long run to the leadership of the same abler men.

CHAPTER X

THE OUTCOME OF THE VENTURE

Compared with the Puritan colonies, Plymouth did not grow rapidly in population or in wealth. It was estimated that in 1640 there were in the Confederation in New England 23,000 persons. Of these not more than 3,000 belonged to Plymouth Colony. At the time of the Union with Massachusetts in 1691, the Bay had 58 towns with about 58,000 inhabitants, while Plymouth had 17 towns with a population of 13,000.[1] Why did the Pilgrim colony, with ten years' start, fail to expand as rapidly as Massachusetts Bay? The primary reason was economic. The *Mayflower*, through force of circumstances, had landed her passengers in territory which they would not have chosen had they had longer time to survey the country. The district they occupied had this advantage, that the Indians had left it vacant. But the soil was exhausted by years of Indian cultivation, and the situation was not particularly advantageous for trade. Winslow perceived that they would have had much brighter prospects if they had originally settled in Massachusetts Bay.

[1] Goodwin, p. 573, n.

When, therefore, the great tide of Puritan migration began to flow, it was natural that, for economic reasons alone, it should set towards Boston rather than towards Plymouth.

If the primary cause of the superior attractiveness of Massachusetts was economic, the religious isolation of the Pilgrims was also a contributory cause, as Dr. Usher rightly insists. Neither Puritans nor Separatists were naturally drawn to the Pilgrims, and the Plymouth Church was not in living touch with any religious community on which it could draw for recruits. Dr. Usher attributes their religious isolation to the aloofness of the Pilgrims themselves, and to certain characteristics of their theological position. He thinks that the Pilgrims attempted to stereotype a passing phase of religious transition in England, and that their position was itself a negation, " nothing more than an uncompromising hostility to the Established Church of England and to the ordination of Bishops." [1] This explanation seems to me erroneous. The description of pilgrim theology as negative is in itself misleading. The negative element of protest never was the fundamental thing in the religious life and thought of the Pilgrims, and it became ever more subordinate. They could not have built up a community on a negation, and they never attempted to do so. The plain fact is, that, whatever the character of their theology, they would have been isolated. Their isolation was due, not to the fact that they held theological positions with which Puritans did not sympathise, or beyond

[1] Usher, p. 188.

which other Separatists advanced, but to the natural outworking of their Independency. It was a consequence of their church organisation, not of their theology, and a consequence much more of the circumstances under which, than of the principle on which, they organised their Church. They claimed their right to constitute a true Church of Christ, apart from others. They did not act in a spirit of exclusiveness, they acted consciously as pioneers. But the result was that they had no organised contact with other Christian groups. When once the bulk of their community had crossed the Atlantic, and they had shed their partners in England, they had no effective links with other Churches. There were many Puritans and Separatists whom the Pilgrims would have welcomed, and who would have fully sympathised with the Pilgrims, but the Pilgrims had no means of getting into touch with them. Their comparative isolation is perfectly intelligible without any appeal to peculiarities of their theology by way of explanation.

Is it fair to represent the Pilgrims as deliberately holding themselves aloof from others? Was the lack of contact with Churches in England, or with other Separatists, to which we have just referred, the result of deliberate purpose or the accident of history? Did they set out to form a "little garden walled around"? It is of course obvious that they did not profess or practise the full principle of toleration. It is also obvious that they went to America to secure the existence and independence of their Church. Having this end in view, they naturally did not welcome colonists who were likely

to subvert their church order. As early as 1623 they had reason to suspect that some of the adventurers were keeping back their own members and endeavouring to destroy their Church by sending over settlers of another stamp. That they were cautious in admitting settlers, and that they did not permit the formation of Churches other than their own, is intelligible under the circumstances. But, even so, they did not take the obvious step to safeguard their position, the step which Massachusetts took when citizenship was confined to Church-members. Plymouth always welcomed settlers who were not Church-members, so long as they were not actively disloyal to the Pilgrim Church and State. It is true that such settlers had to submit to some social and legal pressure which rested on the doctrines of the Church. Sabbath observance was strictly enforced. No one might work or play on the Sabbath. Attendance at public worship was made compulsory, so that if a man was not in sympathy with the Church-life in Plymouth, he found himself in a very uncongenial position. As the first generation passed away, and the community became divided into those who clung conservatively to the old ways and those who no longer shared the earnestness of the founders, restrictive legislation for moral ends multiplied. The process was further stimulated by association with Massachusetts, though Plymouth never went the length of Massachusetts in prescribing individual conduct.

It was, then, a very limited liberty which they established in New England. And yet, as one

studies the history of the first twenty or thirty years of the colony, one is impressed, not by any spirit of jealous exclusiveness in the Pilgrims, but by their amazing patience and their untiring hospitality. They certainly knew how to suffer fools gladly. They seldom limited their hospitality by considerations of moral desert or of the congeniality of those whom they succoured. From their dealings with Weston and his men, on to Bradford's singularly graceful reception in 1650 of a French Governor and the Jesuit priests who came with him, Plymouth showed a catholicity of temper and a consideration for others which evoke admiration. Nor were they intellectually inhospitable before 1650. They were loyal Calvinists, and yet not unwilling to consider other views, as their treatment of both Roger Williams and Charles Chauncey clearly proves. Their minds were not closed by a rigid orthodoxy. They were certainly cautious, and, next to their endurance and their hospitality, their caution and their seriousness were their outstanding characteristics. They were cautious, because they recognised their intellectual limitations, and because they were a small company who could only maintain themselves and their ideals by constant watchfulness. Because of their self-distrust, they avoided controversy, and they felt the more justified in dismissing the contentious, since there were large areas unoccupied in which new settlements could be planted. They did not expel Williams as a heretic; they parted with him as a friend, with whom they still kept in touch, though they ceased

arguing with him. In spite of their caution, there was more openness of mind and less fear of new views in Plymouth than in the Bay.

One conspicuous instance of the greater breadth of mind of the Pilgrims is their record in dealing with witchcraft. When the mania for witch-hunting raged like an epidemic in Massachusetts, there were only two cases in Plymouth, and in neither case was the charge of witchcraft sustained. In the first case, which occurred in 1661, the accuser was found guilty of slander, and duly punished, and in the second, in 1677, when the charge was taken more seriously, the accused was found "Not guilty." This will always redound to the credit of New Plymouth. They retained a sobriety and independence of judgment which kept them freer from superstition than the majority of the Puritans who colonised New England. It is of a piece with this that Bradford refused to dogmatise about the causes and consequences of an earthquake which shook Plymouth on June 1st, 1638. "I leave it to naturalists to judge," said Bradford. On which Mr. Goodwin justifiably remarks, "Few people were then so intelligently deferential to science." It is not likely that Plymouth as a whole was as enlightened as Bradford, but Plymouth generally exhibited a sound common sense, which saved them from some of the errors of better-educated Puritans.

The most conspicuous failure of the Pilgrims was their persecution of the Quakers, 1657–61. In this, as we have already seen, they were urged on by Massachusetts. But it may fairly be argued that, left to themselves, they would still have been

sorely tempted to repress Quakerism by force. The Quakers raised the question of toleration in the form that was most difficult for the Pilgrims. It is not, as writers like Mr. Goodwin suggest, that the extravagant actions in which some of the Quakers presented their testimony outraged decency, but that the central faith of the Quakers cut across some of the most deeply embedded Pilgrim traditions. From the first John Robinson and his followers had disclaimed any apostolic authority for themselves. When Puritans taunt him with making but few converts, he replies that he has no apostolic commission to gather in new peoples. Though they valued highly spontaneous utterance both in prayer and exhortation, the Pilgrims did not regard this as evidence of direct inspiration. When Robinson defends lay-preaching, he appeals to the account in 1 Corinthians of the gift of prophecy, but he is at pains to show that it was an ordinary gift of the Spirit, not anything extraordinary and approaching the gifts of an apostle. Again, the appeal of Robinson was always to the Word of God. and never to the unsupported feelings of the individual conscience. Ainsworth was very emphatic about this. The Separatists claimed to be judged by the Word of God, and repudiated the idea that they were erecting the individual conscience into the final arbiter of truth. This was certainly Robinson's attitude. He did not trust his own judgment. He did not build on conscience, but on a conscience entangled in the Word of God. It was from God's Word that he looked to see more light break forth.

When, then, the Quakers came, with a word from God as sure as any of the apostles ever had, claiming direct inspiration and exalting the inner light above the written Word, the Pilgrims felt themselves to be facing a fanaticism which they had already considered and rejected. Their very humility in religious thought indisposed the Pilgrims to listen to the Quakers, and inclined them to attempt violent methods of repression. They would have tolerated and discussed tranquilly almost any other doctrine that they regarded as error; but Quakerism seemed to make claims too high for sinful men, claims indeed that bordered on blasphemy from the Pilgrims' standpoint. It is not altogether preposterous to suggest that even their virtues contributed to the Pilgrims' failure before the test of Quakerism.

How much, then, did the *Mayflower* contribute to the cause of toleration? Dr. Usher would answer, "Consciously the Pilgrims contributed nothing, unconsciously a good deal." "Toleration was not then believed to be a virtue, and the conduct of Bradford at Plymouth is the exact counterpart of that of Winthrop at Boston, of Eaton and Davenport at New Haven, and of Oliver Cromwell in England." [1] This is a singularly unfortunate and unilluminating comparison. How Bradford's conduct could be at one and the same time the exact counterpart of Winthrop's and of Oliver Cromwell's it is difficult to imagine, since Winthrop and Cromwell were almost in opposite camps so far as the practice and understanding

[1] Usher, p. 109.

of toleration are concerned. Dr. Usher might almost as well have said that the views of the Pilgrims on toleration agreed exactly with those of Torquemada, the Grand Inquisitor, and those of the philosopher, John Locke. There is no comparison possible in this realm between Winthrop, Eaton, and Davenport on the one hand and Oliver Cromwell on the other. Cromwell really did care for toleration. If he set limitations to his toleration, he yet had a fuller appreciation of the principle than any previous English statesman. He was always struggling towards toleration. The New England Puritans were striving to avoid it. Even the three New England leaders did not think alike, Eaton and Davenport being a shade less tolerant than Winthrop. Turning to Bradford's attitude, and the attitude of Plymouth, we may safely affirm that, as it could not be the exact counterpart of the attitudes of all the men named, it was in fact the exact counterpart of none of them. Bradford was not so tolerant and big-minded as Cromwell: he was much nearer to being tolerant than Winthrop or Davenport and Eaton. Moreover, though the Pilgrims never reached the goal, they did consciously and of their own choice walk towards it. As we have seen, their whole history is a protest against the idea that the State can make men true believers. Even when they turned Robinson's concessions to magisterial authority into guiding principles for their own State, they never consented to inflicting the death-penalty on heresy. This alone would compel us to class them with Cromwell rather than with

Winthrop. They deliberately refused to make Church and State co-extensive. They were very patient with those who differed from the standards of the Church, knowing that the only true remedy was a mind better informed. It is true they curtailed liberty of conduct, but they did not attempt, as a rule, to force opinion. Bradford's treatment of some young men who declined to work on Christmas Day, 1621, is fairly typical of Plymouth's attitude. Since these men professed a conscientious scruple against working on Christmas Day, he did not endeavour to compel them to work. He left them, as he says, until they were better informed. When they proceeded to play games in the street he stopped them. They should not play while others worked. There was common sense in this, but it is not complete toleration. and it illustrates the willingness of the Pilgrims and their leaders to restrict liberty of action while respecting liberty of thought. Even when they passed from punishing conduct, of which they disapproved, to enjoining conduct which they thought right, they did not altogether lose sight of the cardinal truth that the line between compulsory religion and no religion at all is non-existent. They knew that State action cannot create genuine religious conviction.

It must also be remembered that, in an intolerant age, those who believe in any degree of toleration have a great difficulty in carrying it out. No one believed more passionately in liberty than Milton, and yet he did not see how to tolerate the Roman Church, which was committed to and is unable to

disavow the principle of the Inquisition. Cromwell had a real faith in toleration, and yet felt obliged to proscribe the prayer-book, because it was the standard of a Church that had persecuted in the past and was prepared to persecute in the future. It was in the interests of toleration itself that Milton and Cromwell conceived these limitations to be necessary. To equate the limitations which Cromwell set to toleration in England with the limitations which Winthrop enforced in Massachusetts, is to ignore fundamental differences of conviction and tendency. Similarly, to assume that every Christian group which stood apart from others in the seventeenth century did so in a spirit of narrow intolerance is to risk confounding diametrically opposite frames of mind. The element of caution and of watchful self-defence which is undoubtedly present in the Pilgrims, may easily be construed as evidence of rigid exclusiveness, as embodying a desire "to escape the necessity of tolerating those who disagreed with them," or a hope of erecting in America "a temporal organisation sufficiently strong to keep divergent minds at something better than arm's length." But this interpretation is nearly the reverse of the truth. When they withdrew from Amsterdam they did so because the Barrowists were too stiff and rigid. The Pilgrim Church migrated to Leyden in order to preserve a larger measure of Christian charity and comprehensiveness than would have been possible in close association with Johnson and Ainsworth. Their apparent aloofness in this instance is due to their greater tolerance, and was

adopted in the interests of genuine catholicism. Similarly, when they parted from Williams and Chauncey, the reason was that they refused to enforce standards of Church-membership on which these ministers insisted, and which would have drawn the limits of their Church-membership on narrower lines. Until 1650 almost every action which can be pointed to as evidence of pilgrim exclusiveness will be found to illustrate their attachment to liberty, not only for themselves but for others. In almost every case where they separate from others, or exercise caution in their communion with others, they act as they do because those others are less tolerant and more rigid than themselves, and the narrowness of their fellow-Christians was, as a rule, the direct occasion of the aloofness and caution of the Pilgrims. They were making a definite stand for greater comprehensiveness than was customary either among Puritans or the bulk of early English Separatists. They did deliberately advance towards toleration, even though they also deliberately stopped short of the goal.

How far did they realise their original purpose of extending God's Kingdom ? This purpose had a twofold aspect. They thought both of securing America as a stronghold and refuge for Protestantism, and also of the missionary enterprise of converting the Indians. Towards gaining a new home for the Reformation they made an essential contribution. When the Puritan emigration took place the destiny of New England was secure, and the pilgrim pioneers could sing the Nunc Dimittis.

They had broken the ice for others, and the honour is theirs to the world's end. The founding of Plymouth was undoubtedly the decisive factor here. Had the Pilgrims failed, the whole history of New England might have been very different. Conceivably it might have been New Holland or New France. The success of the Pilgrims ensured Anglo-Saxon predominance in North America, and entrenched there, not English influence in general, but English Puritanism in particular. Consequently, to understand the genius of the Puritan movement for good and for evil, it is necessary to study it where it made its own home and shaped its own future. In so far as Puritanism represented and represents any essential features of the Kingdom of God, so far the Pilgrims served the Kingdom by pioneering for the great Puritan migration.

The problem of converting the Indians was less easily solved, and the Pilgrims did not undertake any very extensive or successful missionary work. Their contribution was indirect rather than direct. They tried, with some success, to get on friendly terms with neighbouring Indian tribes. They formed alliances, and readily helped the Indians in any way they could. They were careful to treat them with scrupulous justice, and led them to trust the Englishman's sense of fair play, by duly punishing those of their own number who committed crimes against Indians. They set their faces against a double standard of morality and legal obligation for white man and red man. That they always gave the Indians a fair equivalent for the land, corn, and furs which they bought from them

cannot be affirmed. But they were anxious not to overreach their neighbours, and not to take advantage of their ignorance. They always gave the Indians a price in wampum or other goods which satisfied the Indians at the time at least, and they did not try to drive hard bargains. They discountenanced trading spirits and firearms to the Indians, the first for the sake of the Indians, the second for their own sakes. With other colonies, Plymouth took steps to suppress this traffic. And this policy of justice and friendliness went far to civilise and Christianise the Indians. De Rasières, the Governor of New Amsterdam, who visited Plymouth in 1627, bears this striking testimony to the influence of the Pilgrims. After saying that the tribes in the neighbourhood of Plymouth have much the same customs as those in contact with the Dutch, he adds : " Only they are better conducted than ours, because the English give them the example of better ordinances and a better life : and who also, to a certain degree, give them laws by means of the respect they from the very first have established amongst them." [1] For direct missionary effort the Pilgrims had not men of sufficient leisure and capacity. The task of evangelising the Indians was undertaken later by John Eliot, who came to the Bay in 1631, and by Roger Williams, who had great influence with Indian tribes. The success of this work, though limited, contributed to bring on the terrible war with King Phillip in 1675. One of his motives was the fear of losing his braves by conversion to Christianity.

[1] Goodwin, p. 309.

With this missionary endeavour of John Eliot and others the Pilgrims were in full accord, but they never took any leading part in it. Their greatest service to the extension of the Kingdom of God among the Indians was due to the witness of their life and conduct. When Squanto, their earliest Indian friend, came to die, he asked his English hosts to pray that he might go to the Englishman's God in heaven. The Pilgrims certainly helped to turn the faces of their Indian neighbours Godward.

What, finally, was the contribution of the Pilgrim Fathers to the welfare and progress of mankind? Were their views in religion and politics purely negative and old-world? Were the principles they held of merely transient interest, and was their contribution to civilisation undesigned and unconscious, and not the direct outcome of their own thought? The answer to these questions can be given in a sentence. The service of the men of the *Mayflower* to their fellows consists in this, that they were among the first effectively to believe and practically to demonstrate that democracy is essential to the full realisation of the Christian faith, and that the Christian faith is essential to the full realisation of democracy. Though they were far from appreciating all that is involved in the relations of democracy and Christianity, yet this service which they rendered is in the direct line of their own fundamental convictions. Their faith was neither negative nor transient.

The insistence of the Pilgrim Fathers on democracy in the Church is certainly not an attitude of mind which has become an anachronism. It

enshrines a truth that is by no means out of date. The prevalence of the democratic tendency inclines some churchmen to make concessions to what they conceive to be the spirit of the age. That there is in it something more than the spirit of the age many Christians do not realise and are quite unwilling to admit. Consequently those who feel the Church may not trim to suit a passing fashion are opposed to making any concessions to democracy. This question of democracy is still a critical issue for Christian men. Does the demand for self-determination spring from a divinely implanted instinct, or is it a passing fashion? Is democracy part of God's purpose, or a human caprice? To the Pilgrims it seemed that in religion God meant men to stand on their own feet, and to hold the faith on their own personal conviction. They conceived that Christ had purchased for all believers certain inalienable rights in the Kingdom of God, and that these rights involved responsibilities which Christians might not shirk. The life and government of the Church were to be the concern of all her members. They could point back to the New Testament Church, in which the ministry was open to all, and in which all were responsible for discipline. They believed and found by experience that to accept their responsibilities was the means of grace provided for the believer in the Christian fellowship. It was thus that men were to learn by practice the meaning and obligations of Christian love. Without this democratic element in Church fellowship men missed the true Christian discipline. Only in such a fellowship could

leadership assume the form which Christ Himself intended. Robinson conceived that his own pastorate, enjoying the confidence of the Church-members, and subject to their censures, corresponded much more closely to the apostolic office, as Christ meant it to be, than the episcopate, which neither in its appointment nor in its administration acknowledged any appeal to the Christian laity. The Pilgrims held that neither Church nor ministry was fully Christian where the rank and file were deprived of their rights and relieved of their duties. Only in a democratically constituted Church could Christ's reverence for the individual begin to be realised.

It is possible to argue that the Pilgrims were mistaken in their insistence on democracy within the Church, but it is not possible to assert that they were preoccupied with something negative or something trivial. Their view, if true, was, and is, vital to our understanding of Christianity; and, if false, we have still much to do to rectify the effects of their error. For myself, I hold their principles to be substantially true, and in consequence I believe that those Christian Churches and those Christian individuals which deny the necessity of democratic forms to the expression of the Christian religion are contenting themselves with a maimed and imperfect Christianity. Even the element of protest against Episcopacy, which is all that writers like Dr. Usher can see in the Pilgrim's faith, has only ceased to be of interest in so far as Episcopacy itself has changed. Time has not exploded the validity, though it has mitigated the

urgency, of the Pilgrim criticism of the Church of England and of the Anglican Episcopate. The latter is no longer, in temper at least, the prelatic hierarchy, the instrument of an absolute monarchy, which the Pilgrims condemned as unchristian. In so far as the Episcopate still retains an autocratic form, it has still to meet the criticisms which Robinson and others expressed. The Churches which acknowledge a kinship with the Pilgrims will never accept Episcopacy unless it reassumes a constitutional form. That the office of Bishop take on a representative character is desired, not as a concession to the spirit of the age, but as a necessary feature of the Christian religion as some Christians have understood and practised it for some three hundred years.

If the Pilgrims' adoption of self-government within the Church is a contribution to the understanding of Christianity, of which we have not exhausted the significance, their insistence on democracy's need of the Christian faith and life is not less important. The modern world owes much of its democratic organisation and spirit to the Church of Christ. The germs of our representative institutions have with some probability been traced to the organisation of monks and friars. In the seventeenth century Puritanism to a great, and the extremer sects to a still greater extent, constituted the seed-bed and forcing-ground for democratic ideas. The Puritans curbed autocracy in the State. The advance of democracy has not been without set-backs, but it continues. To-day, perhaps, the most significant result of the great

war is the downfall of four autocracies. The world, if not safe for democracy, is at least open to it. Throughout the nineteenth century men have watched the progress of democracy, sometimes with hope and enthusiasm, sometimes with fear and anxious misgivings. Is democracy a good thing in itself, and what will follow its final triumph? Renan viewed with resignation the prospect of Europe becoming Americanised. This was, he thought, its inevitable fate, and he held it would be bad for science and for men of genius. Possibly genius, even within the limits of democracy, could build itself a shelter far from the madding crowd, but, generally speaking, the universal sway of democracy would mean the triumph of vulgar mediocrity. It must be admitted that, if democracy is simply majority rule, and if the majority is without knowledge and without conscience, then the worst fears of the critics of democracy may very easily be realised. Robinson and his Church had no faith in democracy *per se*. Ultimately, they did not think anyone could play his part in democracy either as leader or led unless he were subject to Jesus Christ, and looking at his fellows so far as in him lay through Christ's eyes. In men like Robinson and Bradford was exhibited leadership worthy of a Christian democracy. It is the most difficult type of leadership to achieve, but the men who are capable of it are seldom, if ever, mediocre. They are usually men of outstanding ability. A leader like John Robinson is the direct progenitor of Abraham Lincoln, the most original because the most Christian of nineteenth-century statesmen.

A rock-like steadfastness that will yield nothing that is felt to be morally essential, an unwillingness to move a step further or faster than conviction compels, a self-distrust which hopes to be on God's side, and does not take God's approval for granted, a love of mercy—these great qualities Robinson had in common with Lincoln. Their outward circumstances and responsibilities were very dissimilar, and Robinson fell short of Lincoln's great love for the common people. Yet they are kindred spirits. They were true democratic leaders because they possessed the independence and self-mastery which come from humbling one's self to walk with God. Democracy will not crush out originality and self-expression so long as it is instinct with the spirit of Christianity.

But leaders like Abraham Lincoln will not be discovered, nor will they be loyally supported, unless the led accept the same self-discipline as moulded the greatness of such leaders. The Pilgrim Fathers would have agreed with Edmund Burke as to the conditions on which alone a perfect democracy is capable of realisation. "When the people have emptied themselves of all the lust of selfish will, which without religion it is utterly impossible they ever should, when they are conscious that they exercise, and exercise perhaps in a higher link of the order of delegation, the power which, to be legitimate, must be according to the eternal immutable law in which will and reason are the same, they will be more careful how they place power in base and incapable hands. In their nomination to office, they will not appoint to the

exercise of authority as to a pitiful job, but as to a holy function: not according to their sordid selfish interest, nor to their wanton caprice, nor to their arbitrary will: but they will confer that power (which any man may well tremble to give or to receive) on those only in whom they may discern that predominant proportion of active virtue and wisdom, taken together and fitted to the charge, such as in the great and inevitable mixed mass of human imperfections and infirmities is to be found. When they are habitually convinced that no evil can be acceptable, either in the act or the permission, to him whose essence is good, they will be better able to extirpate out of the minds of all magistrates, civil, ecclesiastical, or military, anything that bears the least resemblance to a proud and lawless domination." This serious temper, which consecrates the State, Burke seems to have thought was best fostered by an Established Church. There the Pilgrim Fathers would have disagreed with him, for they held in effect that a Church which rested on State authority or social prestige could never exert this influence. This temper and outlook would only be maintained in and by a Church in which the people's faith found natural and spontaneous expression, involving moral discipline and real responsibility. Such a Church can alone make democracy safe for the world.

Students of democratic origins sometimes forget that the modern democratic State is the child of the democratic Church. They stress the Renaissance, in which men rediscovered Greece, and make but little of the Reformation, in which men became

aware of the small self-governing communities planted by primitive Christianity throughout the Roman Empire. And yet modern democracy owes more to Geneva than to Athens. Nor will the tradition of Greece suffice to guide and inspire democracy in the future. The witness of the Pilgrim Fathers is to the necessity of building democracy on the foundation of prophets and apostles. They remind us that for the realisation of democracy we need, in a phrase of Dr. Forsyth's, the grace of Israel even more than the grace of Athens.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

THE LEGAL PROCESSES AGAINST THE PILGRIMS

We are sometimes asked what were the exact grounds on which the Pilgrims were arrested, in their earliest attempts to escape from England to Holland. If it was really the intention of King James to harry the Puritans out of the land, why should his officials have prevented an exodus which was entirely according to the mind of their sovereign; and if the repressive measures which the king introduced in the first years of his reign were aimed either at the enforced conformity of his predecessors, or its natural concomitants of forced migration, why were not the Pilgrims allowed to take their departure in open daylight and from the most public places in the great havens, instead of making secret contracts with untrustworthy shipmasters at inflated charges and setting sail, or attempting to do so, from out-of-the-way corners and desolate creeks in the Fen-country? Were they arrested on the charge of Nonconformity, or was it for the crime of going to foreign lands without a passport? Bradford, who is our chief authority for the movements of the Pilgrims, tells us that:

"Though they could not stay, yet were they not suffered to go; but the ports and havens were shut

against them, so as they were fain to seek secret means of conveyance, and to bribe and fee the mariners and give extraordinary rates for their passages." But this leaves us in doubt as to why the ports and havens were shut against people of whom the English Government might naturally wish to be rid. Was it a mere technical evasion of a passport law that King James's officials were on the watch to punish? Or did the authorities imagine that they could enforce conformity (as they were directed to do) by making escape from the ecclesiastic net impossible? Our perplexity is increased by finding that, after the Pilgrims had actually escaped, first to Amsterdam and after that to Leyden, King James continued to harry them through his ambassadors at the Hague, and demanded that they should not be received by the Leyden authorities, in which case we are almost forced to the conclusion that the royal victims (for such by this time they certainly were) would have been returned to England to meet the warrants of the law which were waiting for them, and to find their next residence in English prisons. The document which discloses this royal intention is so important that we give it in full. We shall see that the Leyden people refused to treat with the ambassador for the non-reception of the Pilgrims, and their reply is as honourable a document as can be found in the annals of diplomatic correspondence, of which, as Dr. Plooij says in a recent tract on the Pilgrim Fathers, "Leyden and the Netherlands may be proud." The despatch is found in the Leyden *Missivenboek*, and is to be dated somewhere in April 1609.

"To the honourable, prudent, discreet Jan Janss[en] Baersdorp, Councillor in the College of Deputy Councillors of the States of Holland.

"Honourable, wise, discreet colleague:

" We have received your honourable missive of the XXIIIrd of this month and understood the contents thereof. We attach the following reply :

" We reckon to be unjustly charged by Sir [Ralph] Winwood, the Ambassador of His Britannic Majesty, to the effect that we had entered into agreement with certain Brownists. It is, however, true, that in February last a petition was presented to us in the name of Jan Robarts, minister of the divine word, together with some of the community of the Christian Reformed Religion, born in England, requesting that, as they had the intention of taking up their abode in the City of Leyden, there might be granted to them a free consent thereto. To this we made reply by an official document, that we did not refuse free entrance to honest people, provided they behaved themselves honestly and submitted themselves here to all the Statutes and Ordinances, and for that reason the entrance of the petitioners would be welcome and agreeable to us, as may be seen by the Petition and the attached official reply of which we send your Excellency a copy, premising that nothing has been done by us further in the matter, and that we have not been aware, nor do we at present know, that the Petitioners have been banished from England, nor that they belong to the sect of the Brownists. We therefore beg your Excellency to communicate these presents and the attached document to the Lord Advocate, to the end that no misunderstanding may arise between ourselves and His Majesty's Ambassadors, and that we may be held excused by their Excellencies and consequently by His Majesty.

" Herewith, etc."

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that James was himself involved in the ambassadorial quest. The

Leyden people beg the Ambassador *and His Majesty* to excuse them. Is the original document extant, and would it justify the Leydeners in supposing that they were dealing with James himself in the matter? If so, what did James intend? To have the exiles expelled from Holland? In that case he should have begun with Amsterdam. Possibly he may have done so, and have been informed that they were going to Leyden. The natural inference is that he had board and lodging of an elementary kind waiting for them in England, if he could persuade the Dutch to surrender the Pilgrims, just as at a later date he planned for Brewster, when he demanded his surrender and the break-up of the Leyden printing press.

In bringing them back to England the King would have proceeded against the Pilgrims (at least against the most important persons in the group) according to existing law, that is, according to the statutes of Elizabeth which he was trying to enforce by means of fresh proclamations and supplementary enactment. We shall, therefore, make a good approximation to the solution of our enquiry as to the legal processes put in action against the Pilgrims by saying, in an epigrammatic form, that it was not King James that persecuted them, but Elizabeth.

When we put it that way, in which it is very nearly legal truth, however far it may be from exact historical accuracy, we see that we are really dealing with a particular case of a general problem. This we now proceed to demonstrate.

The Toleration Act of 1689 is one of the landmarks of religious liberty. It was not in itself a far-reaching measure: it only gave partial relief to Nonconformists, and none at all to Jews, Unitarians, or Roman Catholics; it left abuses and injustices on the Statute Book, where they have lingered almost to our own

time; it never professed any general toleration, but only that some relief to a strained political situation was necessary, or, as the preamble to the Act puts it, "some ease to scrupulous consciences in the exercise of religion." The direction in which ease was to come is intimated in the opening clauses in the Act, which tell us that, on taking the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy and making the Declaration against Transubstantiation, certain Acts on the Statute Book would no longer be enforced against the Protestant Dissenter. These Acts were:

The Conventicle Act of 1670 (22 Charles II, c. 1), and four Acts of Elizabeth, viz.:

(*a*) The Act of Uniformity (1 Eliz., c. 2. 14),
(*b*) The Act for Due Obedience (23 Eliz., c. 1),
(*c*) Another Act for Due Obedience (29 Eliz., c. 6),
(*d*) A third Act for Due Obedience (35 Eliz., c. 1).

As these Acts had never been lifted from the Statute Books, it is by these that the Pilgrims would be judged, and their penalties decided. This is a very important point. It comes to this, that, down to the Revolution of 1688, Stuart persecution was Tudor persecution *plus* a certain group of Acts made to accentuate that persecution.

We shall see this more clearly if we turn to the reign of Charles II, and the persecution of the Nonconformists and especially of the Quakers. The question has sometimes been raised as to the legal grounds for the incarceration of thousands of Quakers, and their plunder by officials and informers. Was it merely the application of the Conventicle Acts of Charles II? Let us see.

In the admirable volume of research into Quaker History by W. C. Braithwaite, recently published

under the title of the *Second Period of Quakerism*, the author traces the persecution of the Friends to the statutes of 35th Elizabeth, cap. 1. He makes the following statements:

"The Conventicle Act of 1664 (St. 16. Car. II. cap. 4) was the Quaker Act stiffened and extended to all Nonconformists. It began by declaring the St. 35th Elizabeth cap. 1 to be still in force, in order, I suppose, to allow the ultimate death penalty under that Act to be used. Any person over sixteen years old committed an offence under the new Act who was present at a conventicle or meeting under colour of religion in other manner than allowed by the Liturgy, at which there were five or more persons beyond the household."

The point that Mr. Braithwaite rightly makes is that the Caroline Acts of 1664 and 1670 repose upon the Elizabethan Acts, and just as the Toleration Act begins by telling us that, under certain conditions, certain Elizabethan Acts are not in force, so the Caroline Acts against Conventicles assume and affirm that the Elizabethan legislation is still valid.

We have only to compare the preambles of the statutes to see that this is the case, and that the evil which princes do lives long after them.

Let us take the Caroline Act of 1670. This Act represents in part the Conventicle Act of 1664, known as the 16th of Ca. II. c. 4, and it begins by endorsing the Act of 35th Elizabeth c. 1 in the following manner:

"Whereas an *Act made in the five and thirtieth year of the Raigne* of our late Soveraigne Lady Queen Elizabeth Entitled an Act to retaine the Queenes Majestyes Subjects in their due Obedience hath not been putt in due execution by reason of some doubt of lat made whether the said Act be still in force although it be very clear and evident, and it is hereby

declared *that the said Act is still in force and ought to be put into due Execution*; For provideing therefore of further and more speedie Remedyes *against the growing and dangerous Practises of seditious Sectaries*," etc.

The dependence of the foregoing upon 35 Eliz. appears at a glance: *e.g.*:

"An Acte to retayne the Queenes subjects in Obedyence. For the preventing and avoydinge of such great inconvenyences and perills as might happen and growe *by the wicked and daungerous practice of seditious Sectaries and disloyal persons*," etc.

The Acts which the Toleration Act repealed in part are the same Acts which the Conventicle Acts endorsed and extended, and we have shown that they are the Elizabethan Act of Uniformity, and a group of three Acts which are designed to retain the Queen's subjects in their due obedience (in the matter of attendance at church), which three Acts are internally connected, and interdependent: when we say that the Pilgrims suffered under the 35th Act of Elizabeth, we mean under that Act and the two preceding Acts. The Act of the 35th year of Elizabeth, for instance, presumes the Act of the 23rd Elizabeth, which it carefully specifies, and the Act of the 29th year of Elizabeth does the same. Thus the Act of 35th Elizabeth is described as an Act

"For the more speedy levyinge and recoveringe for and by the Queenes Majestie of all and singular the Paynes, Dutyes, Forfeytures and Payments, which at any time herafter shall accrue growe or be payable by vertue of this Acte or *of the Statute made in the XXIIIrd* year of her Majestie's Raigne concerninge Recusantes," etc.

In the same way the Act of the 29th year of Elizabeth (c. 6) describes itself as an Act

"For the more speedie and due execution of certeyne

Braunches of the Statute *made in the XXIIIrd yere of the Queenes Majesties Raigne*: An Acte to retayne the Queenes Majesties Subjects in their due obedience."

We have now shown the dependence of the Stuart persecutions upon the Tudor legislation, from the time of King James I onwards. Even the transportation clauses in the first Conventicle Act of Charles II are only an adaptation of the Elizabethan statutes for the Abjuration of the Realm, the death-penalty being inflicted in either case upon the returning emigrants. Let us now turn to the section in the 23rd of Elizabeth which directly concerns our Pilgrims: the important section is as follows:

"That every person above the age of xvi yeares, which shall not repaire to some Churche, Chappell, or usual Place of Common Prayer, but forbeare the same contrarye to the tenour of a Statute made in the firste yeare of her Ma^ties^ Raigne for the Uniformitie of Common Prayer, and being thereofe lawfully convicted, shall forfaite to the Quenes Ma^tie^, for every Moneth after the end of this Session of Parliament which he or she shall so forbeare, twentie poundes of lawful Englishe money: and that over and beside the said Forfeytures, every person so forbearing, by the space of XII monethes as aforesaid, shall for his or her obstinacie after Certificat thereof in Writinge made unto the Courte commonly called the Kinges Benche, by the ordinary of the Dioces, a Justice of Assise and Gaole Deliverye or a Justice of the Peace of the Countie, where such Offendor shall dwell or be, be bound with two sufficient Sureties in the summe of two hundreth pounde at the leaste to good Behaviour, and so to continue bounde untill such time as the persons so bounde do conforme themselves and come to the Churche, according to the true meaning of the

said Statute made in the said firste yeare of the Quenes Ma^ties^ Raigne."

So we come back at last to the Act of Uniformity of 1 Eliz. c. 2, which does not contain the £20 fine, but does require all persons to come to Church under pain of spiritual censure and a fine of 1*s.* to the poor! It is a long stride in the way of pains and penalties from a pulpit denunciation and a coin in the poor-box to a monthly fine of £20 in perpetuity, or until due repentance. The enactment is repeated in the Act of 29th Elizabeth as follows:

"That everie such Offendor in not repayringe to Divine Service, but forbearing the same contrary to the saide Estatute, as hereinafter shall fortune to be thereof once convicted shall in such of the Termes of Easter or Michaelmas as shall be next after suche Conviction, paye into the said Receipte of Exchequer, after the rate of twentie poundes for everie moneth which shall bee contained in the Indictment whereupon such Conviction shall be; and shall also for everie monethe after such Conviction, without any other Indictment or Conviction, paye into the Receipte of the Exchequer aforesaide, at two tymes in the yere, that is to saye, in everie Easter Terme and Mich^s^ [Michaelmas] term, as much as then shall remayne unpayde, after the rate of Twentie poundes for everie moneth after such Conviction; and yf Defaulte shall be made in anye part of anye payment aforesaide contrarie to the forme herein before lymited, that then and soe often the Queenes Majestie shall and maye, by Processe out of the saide Exchequer, take seize and enjoye all the Goodes, and two partes as well of all the landes, Tentes [Tenements] and Hereditaments lyable to such Seizure or to the Penalties aforesaide, by the true meaning of this Acte, levinge the third part only of the same Lands, Tenements and Heredita-

ments Leases and Fermes to and for the Mayntenance and Relief of the said offender his Wife children and Familie."

We now know what it means when the High Court of Commission, sitting at York, fined Jackson, Brewster and Rochester twenty pounds apiece; it meant twenty pounds *monthly*, and certain other contingent pains and penalties. The Act Books in the York Registry show clearly the Statute under which the fines were levied, *e.g.*:

"Dec. 1 (1607) Office *v.* Richard Jackson par[ish] Scrowbie. *For his disobedience in matters of religion.* Process served on him and he gave his word to appear to-day. Does not appear. Fined £20 and attachment ordered.

"*Same day.* Office *v.* William Bruster of Scrowbie, gen[tleman]. *Information is given that he is a Borrownist, or disobedient in matters of religion.* Process served and he gave his word to appear to-day. Does not appear. Fined twenty pounds and attachment ordered."

The disobedience to the Queen's Majesty in the matters of religion, with King James substituted for Queen Elizabeth, is the ground of the legal process against the Pilgrims at York, and the severity of the sentence passed is involved in the very terms of the Elizabethan Acts. What does not appear so clearly is the rôle of the informer, nor his share in the plunder. Under 23 Elizabeth, c. 1, the informer got one-third of the fines and forfeitures. Later legislation under the Stuarts appears to have raised this to one-half.

Perhaps that will be enough to explain the action of the Bishop's Court of High Commission at York; it will also be sufficient to show the unhistorical character of Prof. Usher's recent treatment of the subject, in which he ridicules the idea that the Pilgrims

from the Scrooby district were seriously persecuted, and suggests that they were out on quest for the New Jerusalem, when there was really no need to have complained of the insanitary character of the existing Jerusalem! One wonders how Professor Usher would have enjoyed it if there had been a statute against writers of history who add no new facts and misrepresent old ones, and if he had been informed against to the tune of £20 a month and two-thirds of his land and goods! Would he have regarded it as an act of leniency on the part of the Church or State?

There is another point which we learn from the records of the proceedings that have come down to us, and from the scrutiny of the statutes that directed the proceedings. It is sometimes noted, with surprise, that no action was taken against Bradford, whom we know in later times as the real leader of the Plymouth Colony, and the one who was most imbued with Robinson's teaching and with Robinson's spirit. The Elizabethan Acts restrict prosecutions to recusants over sixteen years of age; below that age one did not count as a possible sectary, nor was one legally capable of disobedience to the Head of the Church; moreover, when one became subject to the law, a certain length of time was allowed before the disobedience accrued to a technical crime. In the 35th Elizabeth (c. 1) the period in which the offence accumulates is one month. The Austerfield Registers show that William Bradford was baptized on March 19, 1589–90. He would, therefore, have passed his seventeenth year when the first informations were laid against the Church at Scrooby; but he may very well have escaped ecclesiastical notice on account of his youth, as well as from his belonging to another parish and jurisdiction.

When we pass from the proceedings at York to the arrests of the would-be emigrants and their trial at Boston, we have a disciplinary action of the State rather than the Church. Bradford tells us, vividly enough, how the Pilgrims were betrayed, and how a Sheriff's *posse comitatus* with the local militia came on the scene. Horse and foot, says Bradford, bills and guns. The language is decisive against the idea of a popular rising, or a development of local ill-will, as suggested, perversely enough, by Usher. We may compare, for the illustration of Bradford's language, the terms of the first Conventicle Act of Charles II: "for the better preventing of the mischiefs which may grow by such seditious and tumultuous meetings under pretence of religious worship, the lieutenants or deputy-lieutenants or any commissioned officers of the militia or any other of His Majesty's forces, with troops of horse or foot, and also sheriffs and magistrates, with such assistance as they can soonest get, are required on the certificate of a Justice, to dissolve or prevent such unlawful meetings, and to take into custody such persons as they shall judge to be the leaders and seducers of the rest." This expresses very fairly the kind of action which was called out against the Pilgrims. They were, for the occasion, an unlawful assembly. They might have escaped in a straightforward way by going before a magistrate and declaring their intention of abjuring the realm. In that case it would have been treason-felony to return. They had no intention of so abandoning their native land. They elected to remain Englishmen, and it was as Englishmen they decided to leave the country, with many a backward glance of unwillingness and regret. The official letter of the Burgomaster of Leyden to Ambassador Winwood declines to recognise that the Pilgrims were in banishment, and that must

have been the Pilgrims' own view, and a correct interpretation of the situation.

A word may now be said, in conclusion, with regard to the rough handling and plunder of the would-be emigrants. We must not assume that everything done was illegal; Bradford complains of the way that the Catchpole officers (*i.e.* as we should say, the police) searched the men and women for the money they were carrying. It is quite possible that they were operating under a statute against the export of bullion; for even if the Pilgrims might expatriate themselves, as not being any longer legal tender nor recognised value, they were not at liberty to export coin except under licence. It would not surprise us to find that a *legal* defence might be made of the proceedings against the Pilgrims on a number of minor points; for it is the habit of oppression to robe itself in law, to first enact injustice and then put it into execution, and in England especially this has always been a favourite method. It divides us into a law-abiding and a law-enduring community, the law-abiders being those who make regulations for the law-endurers. Both sides acquire in this way the sense of personal virtue.

J. Rendel Harris.

APPENDIX II

THE DATE OF THE FORMATION OF THE PILGRIM CHURCH

Dr. W. T. Whitley believes that the Pilgrim Church was formed for the first time in Amsterdam. "It is important to notice that this 'Pilgrim Church' was constituted in Amsterdam in 1608, for the general version is that it was constituted at Scrooby in 1606. . . . This mistake is due to the vague reminiscences of Bradford some forty years later, whereas the real facts are given not only by Paget of Amsterdam, but also by Murton of Gainsborough at the time." Dr. Whitley contends that the presence of John Robinson suggested the formation of a new Church, consisting of those who had shared the flight but were not covenanted members of John Smyth's Church. I confess I am reluctant to abandon the express testimony of William Bradford as to the formation of a distinct Church at Scrooby, nor do his reminiscences seem to me vague on this point. I am, further, not convinced that the witnesses to whom Dr. Whitley appeals really enforce his conclusion. John Paget was minister to an English Presbyterian congregation in Amsterdam which formed part of the Dutch Reformed Church. He took up the cudgels in defence of the Puritans against the Separatists. He engaged in controversy with Ainsworth, being particularly nettled by the refusal of Ainsworth to recognise his Church and

ministry. Ainsworth retorted that Paget would not recognise him. Paget replied that his renunciation of Ainsworth's schism and communion cannot be proved by the fact of his gathering a new Church apart from Ainsworth. Then he adds: "By such a reason as this you might prove that Mr. Robinson and his company separated from you at his first coming into this land, because they gathered a new Church apart from you in the same city, you being here a Church before them." This does not necessarily imply that Robinson and his company were not already united in a Church covenant when they first came to Amsterdam. It may only record their decision to remain distinct, and not to link up with Ainsworth's Church. Moreover, Paget's reference to "Mr. Robinson and his company" seems to corroborate Bradford in so far as it suggests that those who came with Robinson were distinctly his company when they came. Paget does not hint that they were a part of Smyth's congregation. Dr. Whitley's idea that Robinson's Church consisted of previously uncovenanted persons is not, in my judgment, very probable.

The passage from John Murton is similarly inconclusive. Replying to John Robinson's defence of baptism received in the Church of England, Murton, who had become a Baptist, said: "Do we not know the beginnings of his [Robinson's] Church? that there was first one stood up and made a covenant, and then another, and these two joyned together, and so a third, and these became a Church, say they, which we deny, except a Synagogue of Satan: for was ever a Church of the New Testament made by a covenant without baptism? There is not the least show for it." This passage may certainly describe something that happened in Amsterdam in 1608, but it is unhappily quite indefinite as to time and

place. It would equally well describe the beginning of the Church in Gainsborough or in Scrooby. In whichever place or whichever year the Church was formed, Murton would know the facts and might readily describe them in these terms. On the other hand, Mr. Burrage [1] has noted a passage in John Dayrell's *A Treatise of the Church*, 1617, in which he speaks of John Robinson having left Johnson's Church. This may point, as Mr. Burrage suggests, to the Scrooby company having united with Johnson's Church at the first. But, if so, it is in open conflict with Paget's evidence. On the whole, there is little solid ground for questioning the account which Bradford gives as to the formation of the Church at Scrooby in 1606. The little company of about 100 persons was already a Church, with Clyfton as pastor and Brewster as elder, when they reached Amsterdam. On arrival they seriously considered the desirability of merging in Johnson's Church. They decided against this course. It is certain that the emigrants reorganised themselves as a church when they reached Amsterdam. It is possible that they stood up and took the covenant together afresh. But they were almost certainly living in some church-fellowship before they left England.

[1] Burrage, *Early English Dissenters*, vol. i. p. 232, note 4.

APPENDIX III

PASSENGERS IN THE *MAYFLOWER*, GROUPED IN HOUSEHOLDS

(*The list is based on those in Arber's "Story of the Pilgrim Fathers," and Dexter's "England and Holland of the Pilgrims."*)

I

†*1. Governor JOHN CARVER.
†*2. Mistress KATHARINE CARVER, his wife.
3. DESIRE MINTER.
4. JOHN HOWLAND, a man-servant.
*5. ROGER WILDER, a man-servant.
6. WILLIAM LATHAM, a servant boy.
7. A maid-servant.
*8. JASPER MORE, a boy that was put to this family.

II

†9. Master WILLIAM BREWSTER, the Ruling Elder.
†10. Mistress MARY BREWSTER, his wife.
†11. LOVE BREWSTER, their son.
†12. WRASTLE (or WRESTLING) BREWSTER, their son.
13. RICHARD MORE, a boy that was put to this family.
*14. ? MORE, a boy that was put to this family.

* Died in the first year. † From Leyden.

III

†15. Governor Edward Winslow.
†*16. Mistress Elizabeth Winslow, his first wife.
17. George Sowle (or Soule), a man-servant.
*18. Elias Story, a man-servant.
*19. Ellen More, a little girl that was put to this family.

IV

†20. Governor William Bradford.
†*21. Mistress Dorothy Bradford, his first wife.

V

†22. Master Isaac Allerton.
†*23. Mary Allerton, his wife.
†24. Bartholomew Allerton, their son.
†25. Remember Allerton, their daughter.
†26. Mary Allerton, their daughter.
*27. John Hooke, a servant boy.

VI

28. Samuel Fuller, the deacon, and surgeon.
29. William Butten, a man-servant.

VII

†*30. Master John Crackston (Crakston), sen.
†31. John Crackston (Crakston), jun.

VIII

32. Captain Miles Standish.
*33. Mistress Rose Standish, his wife.

IX

*34. Master Christopher Martin, the Treasurer.
*35. Mistress ? Martin, his wife.
*36. Solomon Prower, a man-servant.
*37. John Langemore, a man-servant.

X

*38. Master William Mullins.
*39. Mistress ? Mullins, his wife.
*40. Joseph Mullins, their son, a child.
41. Priscilla Mullins, their daughter, a child.
*42. Robert Carter, a man-servant.

XI

†*43. Master William White.
†44. Mistress Susanna White, his wife.
†45. Resolved White, their son.
104. Peregrine White, their son, an infant.
*46. William Holbeck, a man-servant.
*47. Edward Thompson, a man-servant.

XII

48. Master Stephen Hopkins.
49. Mistress Elizabeth Hopkins.
50. Giles Hopkins, his son.
51. Constantia (or Constance) Hopkins, his daughter.

(Two more children by his wife, Elizabeth.)
52. Damaris Hopkins, their daughter.
*103. Oceanus Hopkins, their son, an infant.
53. Edward Dotey (Doty), a man-servant.
54. Edward Leister (Litster), a man-servant.

XIII

55. Master Richard Warren.

XIV

56. John Billington (Billinton), sen.
57. Ellen Billington, his wife.
58. John Billington, jun., their son.
59. Francis Billington, their son.

XV

*60. Master Edward Tilley (Tillie).
*61. Ann Tilley, his wife.
62. Henry Samson, their cousin, a child.
63. Humility Cooper, their cousin, a child.

XVI

*64. Master John Tilley (Tillie).
*65. Mistress ? Tilley, his wife.
66. Elizabeth Tilley, their daughter.

XVII

67. Francis Cooke.
68. John Cooke, his son.

XVIII

†*69. Thomas Rogers.
†70. Joseph Rogers, his son.

XIX

†*71. Thomas Tinker.
†*72. ? Tinker, his wife.
†*73. ? Tinker, their son.

XX

*74. John Rigdale.
*75. Alice Rigdale, his wife.

XXI

*76. James Chilton.
*77. ? Chilton, his wife.
78. Mary Chilton, their daughter.

XXII

*79. Edward Fuller.
*80. ? Fuller, his wife.
†81. Samuel Fuller, their son, a young child.

XXIII

†*82. John Turner.
†*83. ? Turner, his son.
†*84. ? Turner, his son.

XXIV

85. Francis Eaton.
*86. Sarah Eaton, his wife.
87. Samuel Eaton, their son, a sucking child.

"All these died soon after their arrival, in the general sickness that befel; and left no posterity here":

†*88. Moses Fletcher.
†*89. Thomas Williams.
†*90. John Goodman.
*91. Edmund Margeson.
*92. Richard Britteridge
*93. Richard Clarke.

†*94. Degory Priest.
95. Richard Gardiner.
96. Gilbert Winslow.
97. Peter Browne.

Next follow the five hired men.

98. John Alden.
†*99. John Allerton, a sailor.
*100. Thomas English, a sailor.

"There were also other two seamen hired to stay a year in the country":

101. William Trevore, a sailor.
102. ? Ellis, a sailor.

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